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CHARGE

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF LLANDAFF,

AT HIS FOURTH VISITATION,

SEPTEMBER, 1860.

BY

ALFRED OLLIVANT, D.D.

BISHOP OF LLANDAFF.

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CHARGE,

§c.

REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE rapid, though scarcely perceptible, flight of time has brought us again to the triennial Visitation,—a gathering of more than usual solemnity, which compels us, as in God's sight, severally to put to ourselves such questions as these, How have I been discharging the duties of my ministry since we were last assembled on a similar occasion? Does my conscience bear me witness that I have been serving God with my spirit in the Gospel of His Son? What causes of thankfulness or humiliation can I discern in the intervening period? What lessons am I to learn from the experience of the past? What grounds have I for looking forward with cheerful confidence to the future? May I safely conclude that, through God's grace, I have been a faithful steward of the trust committed to me, and that, when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, I shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away?

Such, I think, must be the reflections that will suggest themselves to the mind of a thoughtful and earnest Clergyman at the recurrence of an Episcopal Visitation. Little, indeed, shall we enter into the spirit of such an institution,

if we regard it merely as a lifeless formality,—as an occasion, perhaps, of correcting some crying abuse, should any such unhappily have arisen amongst us, or as an opportunity of hearing from the lips of the Bishop either a statistical account of matters relating to the machinery of the Church, or, at best, a discussion of one of the theological controversies of the day. These things, indeed, may be necessary, and are not to be overlooked. But if they be the only results of our gathering together, I fear that we shall return to our respective spheres of labour with very little increase of spiritual impression. We shall have fulfilled an official obligation; but will our hearts be quickened with holy zeal in the service of our Redeemer? Shall we take more earnest heed than heretofore to ourselves, and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers? The occasion, I think, calls for deep searchings of heart and careful consideration of the objects we have had in view, the spirit in which we have discharged, and the success or failure that has attended our ministry. If it has pleased God to prosper the work of our hands, the contemplation of His goodness may well cause us to thank Him and take courage. If we have no progress to record, we may be prompted to inquire how far we are personally responsible for the want of it. Should a still deeper investigation bring home to us the conviction of sins committed and of duties wholly neglected, or inadequately performed—and who amongst us, if he measure himself by a proper standard, can hope to escape such a conviction as this?—we may well learn from our personal experience the value of that ministry of reconciliation which is entrusted to our care, and resolve, by God's help, to remove every stumbling-block that may have been occasioned by our own fault or negligence, that it may not impede us for the time to come. May it be *your* prayer, my Brethren, for him who is appointed over you in the Lord, that he may finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he has received of the Lord Jesus.

For *you* it is his heart's desire and prayer that the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, may make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen ¹.

There are few things so well calculated to aid the serious reflections to which I have referred, as the changes that occur in a body of Diocesan Clergy between one Visitation and another; reminding the survivors, as they do, in a tone too deep to be unheard, too clear to be misunderstood, of their own mortality. "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever?" How many whom we have known and loved as our fellow-labourers, are gone to their last account! Like ourselves they have severally had their allotted task, but their day of labour is ended; they are gone, and the place that once knew them, knoweth them no more. Did they build upon the only true foundation, Jesus Christ, and Him crucified? Did they lay on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, such materials as alone will abide the test, when the fire shall try every man's work of what sort

¹ An excellent Clergyman of this diocese who closed his ministry in 1852, wrote in 1827, "Our Bishop has sent us very numerous and minute queries about Church matters. I hope, however, that in his Charge he will insist more pressingly upon the fundamental matters of doctrine, and the influence of the Spirit, than the old routine of circumstantial matters, Church repairs We want something home here, both to enlighten and quicken us as a National Church, in the heart, head, and spirit; but if this do not take place, our buildings may look more comely, our congregations perhaps, in some degree, increased by external improvements; still the whitened walls will be the abodes of spiritual death and corruption, no better than the graves around and within." (Brief Memoir of Rev. E. Bassett, p. 81.) It was not till after my Charge was written that I fell in with these words. They inspire me with the hope that many whom it was my privilege to address, would look forward to my own Visitation with similar feelings and desires.

² Zech. i. 5.

it is? Or was the superstructure which they piled upon it, nothing better than wood, hay, stubble, which shall be burned in the day of God's reckoning? It is not for us to forestall the sentence that severally awaits them. But in their departure we may certainly behold the foreshadowing of our own. The solemn mandate that has gone forth in *their* instance, "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward," should surely remind us that "the night cometh when no man can work," and cause us more earnestly to seek the grace of God, that we may "work the works of him that sent us, while it is day."

While musing upon this subject, we cannot, I am sure, forget how grievous are the losses which we have lately sustained among the lay members also of the Church. In this immediate neighbourhood, not to mention other valued friends, whose hearty co-operation in works of piety and benevolence entitle them to our affectionate remembrance, it has pleased God to remove from us a most noble lady³, who to her power, yea and beyond her power, with a large heart and liberal hand, was ever ready to assist in our diocesan and parochial charities, and, so far as she could, to follow in the steps of her lamented lord, who had set her a bright example of the Christian use of property and influence.

I am sure, too, that I am only doing justice to your feelings as well as my own, if I say that we have heartily sympathized with another noble lady⁴, to whom the Church, both in this diocese and elsewhere, is largely indebted for her munificent liberality, in the premature removal of a very near relative⁵, who was also our neighbour and friend. Thank God, we are not without noble and gentle families, the heads of which consider it the best use they can make

³ The late Marchioness of Bute.

⁴ The Baroness Windsor.

⁵ The Hon. Robert Windsor Clive, M.P.

of the property He has entrusted to them, to devote it to His service. But in the peculiar condition of our diocese, overwhelmed, as it is, with an ever increasing tide of population, and having a vast arrear to overtake of past indifference or unaccomplished purposes of good, to us short-sighted mortals it would appear, that the losses we have had to deplore are not likely soon to be replaced. In the restoration of the venerable building within which we are now assembled⁶, both the one and the other of the departed friends to whom I have referred, exhibited the most substantial proofs of a generous interest. Should these providential visitations remind us, as they no doubt are intended to do, of the Divine admonition, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" let them persuade us to fix our hopes more simply upon Him who has promised to His Church, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." If this be the practical instruction that we derive from the changes that pass before our eyes, assuredly we shall find that "God will be merciful unto us and bless us, and show us the light of his countenance and be merciful unto us."

And, I think, my Reverend Brethren, that upon a review of our diocesan Church history for the last few years, we may venture to say, without incurring the charge of presumption or self-adulation, that it *has* pleased our Heavenly Father to bless us in no ordinary measure.

It is true, indeed, that there *may* be an increase in the external apparatus and machinery of a Church, without a corresponding growth in the inner and spiritual life of its professing members. The one should never be mistaken for the other. Woe unto us if we can say nothing better to our Lord than, "Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here⁷!" However zealous we may be in building Churches, or promoting National Education or Missionary work at home or abroad, if our

⁶ The Cathedral, Llandaff.

⁷ Mark xiii, 1.

labours are not labours of love, they will profit us nothing; it is only to the true Christian individually, and the collective body of the Church, that we can really apply the Apostle's declaration, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of the living God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you^s?" Although, however, we must not exclusively depend upon that which is outward and visible, still it is only from the contemplation of what presents itself to our observation, that we can form any judgment at all of the vitality of a Church. When, therefore, we find that the hearts of those around us have been prompted to further our efforts for the religious improvement of their fellow-creatures, we cannot but hope,—in many cases it is impossible for us not to feel assured,—that these outward acts are the manifestation of an inner life, and prove that there is a growing sense of the responsibilities of wealth, a deeper feeling of the value of the soul, and a more earnest desire for the temporal and eternal welfare of those whom our Lord has redeemed with His most precious blood.

While comparing the present with the past, I would thankfully commemorate the fact that our venerable Cathedral is now completely covered from east to west, and the intersecting wall which for more than a century had divided the pseudo-Italian temple from the beautiful but roofless early English ruin, with the exception of a small portion of it which is left for a purpose of temporary convenience, is swept away. The exhaustion of our funds, will, I fear, prevent us from proceeding at present with our work. So much, however, has been done, and so thoroughly well done, that beyond a doubt, if we ourselves have not the privilege, those who come after us will see it accomplished.

The historian of the Cathedral, writing in 1718, tells us that some fragments of the pipes of an organ, which had been presented after the Restoration by Lady Kemeyes of

^s 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19.

Cefn Mabley, were in his time lying about in a loft at the top of the stalls; and a letter of Mr. Browne Willis is preserved in the Bodleian Library, in which he pleasantly observes that the organ and organist had breathed their last about thirty years before. I need not remind you that since then our Cathedral has possessed neither organ nor choir. An effort is now being made to raise the necessary funds for the purchase of an instrument suitable to the dignity of the sacred edifice, which the exertions of the Dean and Chapter and public liberality have, if I may so speak, raised from the dead. We have no means of our own available for the purpose; but should an organ be provided, as, from the measure of assistance already promised, we confidently hope it will, by contributions from the friends of the Church, the falling in of certain leases which the Chapter on public principle have forborne to renew, will enable them, it is believed, ere long to defray from their own resources the expenses incidental to the restoration of the Choir. As the Cathedral of Llandaff is the only one in the kingdom that is without an organ—a help to congregational worship which almost every Parish Church in our cities and towns, and many of our Rural Churches, are privileged to enjoy—may we not hope that our Christian brethren, not only in this diocese but throughout the land, will aid us in our effort to supply this pressing necessity; that the voice of joy and melody may again resound within the hallowed walls of our Mother Church, and that with one mind and one mouth, and with a fitting expression of praise and thanksgiving, we may glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ⁹?

⁹ Since the Charge was delivered the Dean and Chapter have entered into an engagement with Messrs. Gray and Davison to build an organ at the cost of 900*l.*, of which about 200*l.* have yet to be raised. The reconstruction of the roof of the north side-aisle, which is absolutely necessary, will probably entail an additional expense of nearly 1000*l.*; and, in order to prevent injury to the instrument, it is most desirable that this should be undertaken before the organ is introduced.

During the last eleven years—the period that has elapsed since my respected predecessor was removed from among you—in this comparatively small diocese, twenty-four entirely new churches have been built, twenty-three old parish churches have been rebuilt from the ground; in many cases upon a larger scale, and with more architectural beauty than they before possessed. In forty others there has been, upon the whole, a very large outlay for the purposes of restoration or additional accommodation. It is most satisfactory, too, to be able to say of our churches generally, that they are in a condition of far more than decent propriety; and, in the name of the Church, I beg to thank you, Gentlemen Churchwardens, for the zeal and readiness with which you have attended to the suggestions of the Archdeacons, upon the various points which they have brought before you. It is to your combined exertions that we must ascribe this happy result. “There seems,” says the Archdeacon of Monmouth, in his triennial report to me as to the condition of the churches in his Archdeaconry, “to be yet no abatement in the zeal which has happily prevailed in the diocese for the last sixteen years or more for the appropriate repair of the churches, and their orderly arrangement for public worship, as well as their provision with more decent and suitable furniture. I am often astonished at the sums of money which are raised in very poor districts for the re-instatement of the parish church. The flame seems to catch on every side. No sooner has one church in any neighbourhood been decently repaired or restored, than similar measures begin to be talked of in the surrounding parishes; and it would appear that the result after a few years will be, that a church greatly out of repair, or in a thoroughly neglected state, will be the exception and not the rule, as it once was in this diocese.” To this statement I am thankful to be able to add—as I can from the report of the Archdeacon of Llandaff—that the same spirit has animated the other Archdeaconry in a no less remarkable degree.

In addition to the increase of accommodation provided in the new, and by re-arrangement of the old churches, there are now no fewer than thirty-four buildings, in which divine worship is celebrated with the sanction or license of the Bishop, of which, if I am not mistaken, not more than five existed or were so employed ten years ago. It is true that this fact is an evidence of the need there still is for more churches, and of the difficulties with which the parochial system is hindered and oppressed in this diocese. But if at present we have not a sufficient number of churches, we are thankful for the mitigation of the evil by means of these licensed rooms, and trust that they are at least the dawn of a brighter day. The question is worthy of consideration, whether, in the interior arrangements of some of these rooms, something might not be done to give them more of an ecclesiastical character. In some cases, perhaps, it would not be expedient to build a church even if the funds for so doing were at our command; but in all cases, it is desirable to form and strengthen such habits of mind in the school-room worshipper as may tend to reverence and devout feeling, and cause him to appreciate the sober dignity of our liturgical services.

In 1821 Bishop Van Mildert complained that "more than two-thirds of the livings in this diocese had no glebe houses," and "that scarcely more than one-third of the parishes were provided with schools of any description." During the episcopate of Bishop Copleston very great exertions had been made to supply the want of parsonages, and since his death in 1849 twenty-eight more have been built, or secured either by gift or purchase. The progress of education within the same time has also been marked and decided. No fewer than fifty-seven school-rooms have been erected in connexion with the Church, and, generally speaking, are well attended. The inquiry made by the National Society during the years 1856-7, and published in 1858, showed that the number of scholars under Church instruction, in the whole county of Glamorgan, was at that time 16,507, or about one in fourteen

of the entire population; in Monmouthshire, 10,472, or about one in fifteen. The total annual income of Church Schools in the former county, including endowment, school-pence, capitation grant, and subscriptions, was 4482*l.* 2*s.* 3*d.*; in the latter, 3984*l.* 4*s.* 10*d.*¹

And here it is but common justice to acknowledge the munificence with which the employers of labour in several instances of late years, have contributed their aid to the progress of education. In both our counties Prize Associations, mainly supported by them, have been founded, with a view to induce the children of the labouring class to remain longer at school than is ordinarily the case. The schools of Dowlais, Abersychan, and Pontymoel are striking instances of a princely liberality. Neither are they the only ones that might be so described. It is true that in some cases the schools are not in union with the Church. We do not dissemble our regret that a necessity is felt for conducting them upon another principle; but we do not on that account withhold this grateful acknowledgment. Better far that the children of the labouring classes should be educated as Christians, though not by ourselves, than that they should not be instructed at all. It is with pleasure we accept the assurance which we find in the report of one of them, and which, we hope, may be extended to all, that its conductors "make the Bible the basis of their religious teaching, and, resting upon this, inculcate only such fundamental doctrines as that of the Divinity of Christ and the Atonement, and avoid carefully any sectarian teaching²."

Among the causes that are likely still further to promote the interests of the Church in this diocese, provided we zealously devote ourselves to our work, may be mentioned the rapid extension of the English language. Hitherto the Church has been under a manifest and painfully felt disadvantage as compared with the Dissenting communities, because the Clergy have been obliged to provide both for

¹ See Appendix, No. I.

² Report of Dowlais School, 1857, p. 13.

their English and Welsh parishioners, needing of course separate instruction ; while the Dissenting Ministers have had to preach and pray, for the most part, only in one language, their congregations consisting almost exclusively of the Welsh speaking part of the population, and of persons in the same class of society. In many parishes, where the resources of the Church have scarcely sufficed for the support of one clergyman, the services of two have been imperatively required, and the want of two separate churches, with services respectively in one or other of the two languages, has thrown a very great hindrance in our way. Do what we would, we have found it impossible successfully to contend with this difficulty. Happily a change is coming over us, which will gradually remove this obstacle, and if we are not wanting to ourselves, will place us on the vantage ground of which other religious bodies have hitherto been in possession. That such a change is rapidly going on is patent to every one resident in the country, and the fact is confirmed by testimony which is beyond dispute. "One proof," says Her Majesty's Inspector, "of the increase of efficiency of Schools in Wales, is to be found in the greater diffusion of the English language. This result, for which the inhabitants of the Principality are really anxious, is capable of confirmation by any one who, like an Inspector, has to visit the country in its length and breadth, mix with all classes of the people, and hear their wants and wishes expressed on this point without reserve, and, I may add, (for it is not without its significant meaning) without compulsion³." But a

³ Report of Rev. H. Longueville Jones to the Committee of Council on Education, for the year 1859. A curious application, illustrative of the desire referred to by Mr. Jones, was made to myself a few years ago. The members of a congregation worshipping in a licensed room, in which I had directed that the service should be conducted in Welsh, sent a deputation to me to request that I would allow it to be in English ; upon my asking the bearer of the request, who spoke the latter language imperfectly, why they desired the change, he replied, that they wished their children to learn English.

more remarkable testimony is to be found in the circumstance, that the dissenters have begun to discover that they can no longer hope to retain their influence by the exclusive use of the Welsh language. "In many districts of the Principality," observes an eminent dissenting minister of this diocese, "the state of society is just now passing through an important change by the rapid increase of the English population, and the consequent prevalence of the English language. Nothing will prevent the utter extinction of our interests in those districts but the immediate establishment of efficient English preaching; we have been taught by experience that English and Welsh services in the same chapels will never answer⁴." Alas! how often have *we* had to complain of the same result! How often have we been blamed for a want of success, which, under existing circumstances, it was almost idle to expect!

For the increased number of our churches and schools, and for the large addition that has been made to our staff of clergymen, we are very deeply indebted to the great central societies.

But it is to the admirable working of our own Diocesan Society for Promoting Additional Church Accommodation and Pastoral Superintendence, that we must chiefly refer the good that has been accomplished; not, perhaps, so much for the actual amount of money which it has been enabled to raise and expend—though this has not been small—as for the spirit it has tended to excite, the sympathy it has created between the Laity and Clergy, the various objects to which, as being under our own management, we have been enabled to adapt it, and the fact of its furnishing within our own limits a centre of operation, which has also proved a centre of unity and source of strength. Many a good work has been undertaken and

⁴ From "The Congregational Churches of Wales." A Paper read at the Autumnal Meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, held at Halifax, October, 1858, by Thomas Rees, Beaufort, Monmouthshire, p. 11.

carried to a successful termination, which would never have been thought of, or, if contemplated, would at once have been abandoned in despair, had it not been for the assurance that a local society, capable of appreciating the facts of the case, and not bound by the rigid laws which a central and distant association may find essential to the proper conduct of its affairs, would regard it with a favourable eye, and assist it with a liberal hand. Ten years have now elapsed since the Society entered upon its work. During that time it has been actively employed in furthering the erection of new churches, the rebuilding of some of our ancient parish churches, or the increase of the sittings in others, the building of school-rooms to be licensed for divine worship, and the support of additional pastors, paid wholly or in part by its funds. Until the state of its finances compelled it to lessen its expenditure, it contributed 100*l.* per annum in Exhibitions at St. David's College, hoping thereby to mitigate the evil of what is perhaps the greatest of all the wants of the Church in South Wales, the inadequate supply of well-educated Welsh speaking clergymen. In addition to these objects, it has assisted several of the clergy of our miserably endowed benefices in the erection of parsonages, helping by this means not only to lessen the evils of a small clerical income, but also to remove one of the causes of non-residence, and by so doing to promote the general efficiency of the Church. By the grant of 50*l.* it co-operated with the Tithe Redemption Society and several individual contributors, in the purchase of the impropriate tithes of a hamlet in the District Chapelry of Resolven, and helped to restore them to the spiritual uses for which they had originally been dedicated to the service of God. By another grant of 100*l.* it doubled a sum which had been bequeathed for the augmentation of the Incumbency of Glyntaff, and thereby secured a donation of 200*l.* more from the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty for the same object. Its total

expenditure has been 11,299*l.* 6*s.* 5*d.*,—a sum, however, which very imperfectly represents the expenditure it has occasioned, and the benefit that has been conferred upon the diocese through its instrumentality.

It was not without considerable apprehension that, as a comparative stranger in 1850, after reflecting upon the letter which had been publicly addressed to me by our present Dean, at that time Archdeacon of Llandaff, upon the spiritual wants of the diocese, I ventured to request the clergy and gentry of the two counties to assemble at Bridgend and Newport, that we might look our difficulties in the face, and deliberate by what means they might be best met and overcome. The result of those preliminary meetings was, as you know, the formation of the Society, which has accomplished this large amount of good.

The cursory review which I have taken of its proceedings, must be sufficient, I think, to awaken an universal feeling, that an institution that has proved itself so effective, cannot possibly be allowed to languish or expire. For whatever the good that has already been done, we have yet thousands of people with whom our clergy have no means of coming into contact. Making every allowance for the activity of dissent, and supposing that the question between Dissent and the Church were purely speculative—that it matters nothing whether a man be spiritually trained by the one or the other—even then we might cast our eye over many portions of our diocese with the feelings which melted the heart of our blessed Redeemer, when He beheld the multitudes, and had compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. If, however, the Society is to continue in its efficiency, it is absolutely necessary that some vigorous measures should be adopted, and *that* at once, for the augmentation of its funds. Many of its supporters in the first instance subscribed large sums, to be paid by annual instalments in five years. These

sums have long ago been paid in full; and as the income of the Society has never equalled its expenditure, it has only been able to comply with the urgent entreaties of the applicants for its bounty, by living on its capital. Unless, therefore, something is done to recruit its nearly exhausted stock, its operations must, ere long, be confined to the comparatively small expenditure of its annual subscriptions and parochial collections.

And here, Reverend Brethren, you must bear with me if I remark that these latter, the parochial collections, have never equalled the expectations—the just and reasonable expectations, I cannot hesitate to say—which the intrinsic importance of the Society's objects, the urgency with which the clergy apply to it for help, and the direct bearing of its work upon the welfare of the diocese, had led us to form. Upon the average of nine years—for the accounts of the tenth year have not yet been made up—the total receipt of each year from this source has been 279*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.*, which, if the number of churches during the whole time had been what I believe it to be nearly at present, viz. 279, would give an average of 1*l.* for every church. But, inasmuch as some parishes contribute large sums,—10*l.*, 20*l.*, or even 40*l.*,—we are driven to the conclusion that very many fall far short of that average amount. In fact, though I speak it with unfeigned regret, there are not a few parishes from which no response whatever is made to the circular letter which, at the special request of the Society, I annually address to the clergyman of every parish and district on its behalf. I cannot think that this result will, upon reflection, commend itself to your own approbation. A very little exertion on the part of the clergy would surely produce *something* where nothing has hitherto been collected, and possibly *something more* where a remittance has been already made. We cannot have deliberately come to the conclusion with respect to the people, whom we are bound to train to the exercise of every christian grace, that their sympathies

need not be enlisted on the side of an object so eminently calculated to promote the glory of God, and the welfare of man. It is, I know, urged by some, that the multiplicity of charitable objects for which they have to plead, is an obstacle in their way. Let it be understood that in this matter I claim no right to interfere with your liberty. But I may, perhaps, be permitted to express my hope that wherever this plea is urged, the exertions that are made for some or other of these benevolent purposes are such as to prove its validity, and to vindicate it from the suspicion of being merely adopted as an excuse for doing nothing at all. And I think, too, that I may seriously propose to the consideration of those who avail themselves of it, whether any object at home or abroad can be compared for one moment with the spiritual necessities of our own brethren, the persons with whom we have been brought, by Divine Providence, into immediate connexion, the souls that are especially committed to our own ministry as pastors of the same flock, and of which, so far at least as we are capable of promoting their spiritual welfare, we shall have to render an account.

The problem by what means we are to provide for the support of a sufficient number of clergy for the amazingly increased, and ever increasing, population of the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan has not, I think, as yet been solved in a satisfactory manner. That our endowments cannot possibly meet the demand is too obvious to need remark. To expect that a Welsh diocese, abounding in mineral wealth, and whose commerce and population are expanding themselves on every side, should be permanently dependent, even to the degree to which it is so at present, upon societies mainly supported by English charity, is as unreasonable in itself, as it is unmanly and unworthy of our position. To suppose that the proprietors of land or minerals, or the employers of labour should do *all* that is requisite, would be to overlook the fact that others, as well as they, are profiting from the

commerce and wealth of the diocese, and consequently that *their* responsibility, great as it necessarily must be, does not supersede that of the sharers in their gain. If the farmer has an advantage in the higher price of his produce, the tradesman in the greater demand for his wares, and the labourer in the higher rate of his wages than he would obtain elsewhere, it is a necessary result that every one of these is placed under a greater responsibility; that every one, according to his ability, is bound to devote a portion of his property directly to the service of God. And even without introducing the consideration of personal advantage, supposed to be derived from the altered condition of the country, there is no class or individual amongst us exempt from the obligation of taking a part in the grand Christian enterprise of bringing our miners and colliers, and the dense masses of our town populations, to the obedience of the faith.

We must, then, I think, come to the conclusion that the providing of such agencies as may be necessary for the evangelizing of our people, can only be hoped for in proportion as we can interest all classes of society in the work, and bring it home to the conscience of every individual, that he himself, as a member of the Church, has a part in it to perform. Did it please Almighty God, He could, no doubt, accomplish it without human agency at all; and sad indeed would it be, did we substitute human agency in our secret thought for the outpouring of His Spirit upon the hearts of men. But in His moral and spiritual, no less than in His providential government, He is wont to accomplish His purposes by human instrumentality. To expect His blessing, then, if we are not employing a suitable machinery, is rather to cast ourselves down from the mount in a spirit of presumptuous confidence, than humbly to wait upon Him in his appointed way. If, however, the machinery *is* to be provided on a scale commensurate with the necessities of the case, *the habit of giving* for directly religious purposes must become far more general, and our collections must

be drawn from a much wider area than at present is the case. When property was exclusively in a few hands, as it was some centuries ago, the lord of the soil, acting upon that voluntary principle of which we hear so much in the present day, as if it was known only to dissenting communities, but which in fact is the basis of all our own Church endowments, built a church and endowed its minister for ever with a tenth part of the produce of his lands. By so doing he acknowledged the religious obligation that attaches to property, viz., to render to God the things that are God's, while he demanded from his vassals and tenants the return that was due to himself as their temporal lord. In the present day, the same obligation rests upon the many, though of course in a different degree, which in those days was confined to him alone. The circumstances of society are changed, but the claims of Christian charity are fixed and unchangeable. If property is now diffused instead of being concentrated, the religious necessities of the land having still to be supplied from the same source, the contribution must of necessity be spread over the whole community, instead of being the offering of private and individual liberality.

I fear, my Reverend Brethren, that our congregations, generally speaking, are very little aware of this Christian obligation. And if they are not, have not *we* especially a duty to perform, viz., to enlighten them upon the subject? In the evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Lords on the assessment and levy of Church Rates, it is stated, that "some 2000 charitable individuals bear all the expenses of all the good deeds done in Birmingham⁵," and

⁵ Evidence of the Hon. and Rev. G. M. Yorke, Question No. 409. The testimony of Dr. Miller is to the same effect: "It would release," he says, "a good deal of money which is now got from the pockets of the generous few; we should get a great deal of money from those unworthy Churchmen who call themselves Churchmen, but never give us any thing: I think one great mischief of the present system is this, that every thing we get is got from some few hundreds of persons, and that the great majority of those

yet in 1851 the population of Birmingham was 173,951⁶, the number of its Churches was eighteen, and of sittings in those Churches, 23,796⁷; and this, I fear, corresponds very much with general experience⁸. The sums that are raised for religious objects within the Church are unquestionably far greater in the present, than in any preceding age; but it is the same persons, or nearly so, whose names are inscribed in every list. The number of those who offer to the service of God, so far as we can judge, is comparatively small; the great mass of the people partake of their own religious privileges, but think little, it would appear, of the spiritual wants of their countrymen—they do not practically recognize the duty that rests upon themselves of throwing a portion of their substance into the treasury of Christian love, for the specific purpose of becoming fellow-labourers with God in the extension of the kingdom of Christ.

The parliamentary publication to which I have just referred, exhibits in the very clearest light, not only the painful influence of this defect of duty as a blight upon our efforts for Church extension, but in its bearings also upon the occupations, the character, and the effectiveness of our clergy themselves. In our large towns especially it has cast upon them a burden which they cannot possibly sustain with a due regard to the spirituality of their office. I speak not now of a pecuniary burden, though this too is imposed upon them to a degree very little considered or understood; but a burden of actual labour, of time robbed from their proper and religious duties by the post or the press; of energies consumed in wearisome appeals to the charitably-

who belong to us give us nothing," No. 185. "The upshot is that all the money we get for religious objects comes from comparatively very few pockets," No. 186.

⁶ Census, vol. i., Div. vi. p. 79.

⁷ Census of Religious Worship, p. 76.

⁸ See No. 1182, of the Report on Church Rates.

disposed, to supply the lack of service which their own people cannot, or will not, render. "There is not a Birmingham Clergyman at present," says Dr. Miller, "who if he wants to do any thing that is at all out of the way, does not sit down and write appeals, and I could count off upon the ends of my fingers the first ten persons that every Clergyman would write to as a matter of course⁹." "The truth is that begging is now a chief element in our duties¹⁰." It "most seriously" interferes with the time which the Clergyman ought to give to his parochial duties, and does "most heavily" add to his anxieties¹. "We all feel in Birmingham that we are becoming secularized more and more every day: we get on by constant begging²." "It has been very injurious to my ministry," says the Vicar of St. Mary's, Nottingham, "to have been always engaged in begging, when I ought to be making way with the population in spiritual matters³." It may be said, perhaps, that Birmingham and Nottingham are particular cases, from which no general conclusion ought to be inferred. But may we not confidently ask whether the experience of the Clergy of these towns, as thus described, is not a mirror in which many others may see a too faithful image of their own? How much precious time is thus consumed which you would gladly devote to your pastoral and other professional duties, many of *you*, my Reverend Brethren, well know, for precisely the same necessity is imposed upon yourselves.

The fact that so little is done for the extension of the kingdom of Christ at home and abroad by multitudes who call themselves churchmen, is well calculated to suggest the inquiry whether we, their ministers, are in the habit of faithfully instructing them how great is their responsibility in reference to this matter. When we have laid

⁹ No. 236, Report as above.

¹⁰ No. 238.

¹ See Nos. 240, 241.

² No. 242. See also the evidence of the Hon. and Rev. G. M. Yorke, Nos. 349, 356, 357, to the same effect.

³ No. 1183.

the one only foundation of all true piety, the finished work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, do we habitually show them how their principles ought to be reduced to practice, how they ought to abound in the work of faith and labour of love? Do we urgently inculcate that their gold and silver are the Lord's, and that "he that soweth bounteously shall reap also bounteously?" Or is the practical application of our doctrinal teaching lost in a vague generality of statement? Are we afraid—perhaps under the idea of interfering with the fundamental truth of our justification through God's free and unmerited grace—of speaking of almsgiving as our Lord and His Apostles constantly speak of it, when flowing from, and considered as a manifestation of, Christian principle? "These shall go into life eternal." "Charge them that are rich in this world . . . that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment." "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world." Do not all these passages show—and if so, ought it not to be a substantive portion of our teaching?—that love to man, testified by acts of self-denying, practical benevolence, is an evidence that we are animated by the Spirit of Him who is Love itself; and that if such be our spirit and practice, He will acknowledge us as His own at the last day? If we have been negligent in this matter, how much may *we* have to account for, not because this or that charitable project may have partially failed, but, which is of far more consequence, because the Christian character of our people may have suffered loss through our neglect. The standard they have aimed at may have been too low, possibly because *we* may not have taught them with sufficient faithfulness how they might attain to the full measure of the stature of Christ. Their hearts may not have been warmed

with that heavenly grace of charity, “without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before God,” because we have not inculcated, as we should have done, the great principle, that he who loveth God should love, and prove by his actions that he really does love, his brother also.

There is, however, another consideration that connects itself with this subject. That the Church must look to the voluntary principle in her efforts to prevent our population from relapsing into a semi-heathenism, is a fact from which it is impossible to turn our eyes. Are we then adopting that course which is best calculated to impress this truth upon the minds of our people? A great many societies are in active operation, and by their instrumentality a large amount is collected for the furtherance of many useful and excellent objects. It is not my intention to say a word against the principle upon which these associations are formed, nor to discourage in any degree the willing mind which prompts to their support. So far as they are doing God’s work, we wish them good luck in the name of the Lord. It is, however, worthy of consideration, whether the restoration of a weekly Offertory, or if not, the establishment of a monthly, or at any rate of a periodical collection in our churches on the Lord’s day,—if it could be accomplished,—might not, under God’s blessing, provoke our people to love and good works; and whether our want of success may not in some measure be ascribed to an abandonment of a mode of collecting alms which rests on the authority of Holy Scripture, which was practised by the Primitive Church, and which our own Church has expressly enjoined us to adopt. For that we have abandoned such a custom is beyond a doubt. I am of course aware of the prejudice that exists against the restoration of the weekly Offertory. Strange as it may seem, the Offertory is regarded by many as an indication of certain peculiar theological tendencies—a practice adopted only, or chiefly, for party purposes. But surely, if we are reasonable men, we are not to be carried along by mere prejudice; we are

not to approve or condemn what is submitted to our judgment, merely because it is advocated by this, or disapproved by that party in the Church. Do we profess to take Scripture as our rule? Let us then appeal to its decision. Are we faithful members of the Church? Let us inquire whether she has given any direction to assist us in our judgment, or laid down any rule for our actual conduct.

The question for our consideration is, How are we to enlist the sympathies of the middle and lower classes in works of charity, and to persuade them to take their part in building up and furthering the extension of the Church? When Christianity was first planted, its converts were chiefly of the lower classes. Not many mighty, not many noble were called. Under these circumstances it was that St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as he hath been prospered, that there be no gatherings when I come ⁴." The collections of the infant Church were not made exclusively for the poor. That the Clergy at a very early period were supported by the oblations of the Church, is a fact as certain as any in Ecclesiastical History ⁵. And inasmuch as "the whole fiscal apparatus of the Church, as it became developed in the lapse of time," — to use the words of Professor Blunt,—"was merely a superstructure naturally arising upon the lines laid down by the Apostles themselves ⁶," we may reasonably conclude that they who went forth in Christ's name, taking nothing of the Gentiles ⁷, partook of this portion of the Church's offerings, as well as of her other oblations.

The mention made by Justin Martyr ⁸ of the offerings

⁴ 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

⁵ Bingham. Vol. i. p. 466. London. Edit. 1821.

⁶ Hist. of the Church in the First Three Centuries, pp. 27, 28.

⁷ John iii. 8.

⁸ First Apol., chap. lxvii.

in the solemn assembly on the Lord's day shows that the rule prescribed by the Apostle was recognized and acted upon by the Church in the second century.

With regard to our own Church there can be no doubt whatever in what light she regards the matter, or what would be our practice did we strictly follow her directions. For the Rubric enjoins that "then," i. e. after the sermon, "shall the Priest return to the Lord's Table, and begin the Offertory, saying one or more of these sentences following, as he thinketh most convenient in his discretion;" the sentences referred to bearing not only upon almsgiving to the poor, but also upon the support of the clergy; as, for instance, "Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things live of the sacrifice; and they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel;" and a further direction is given, that "while these sentences are in reading, the Deacons, Churchwardens, or other fit persons appointed for that purpose, shall receive the alms for the poor, and other devotions of the people,"—devotions or gifts, evidently distinguished, as you will observe, from the alms for the poor⁹.

The subject of Church Extension has naturally engaged the attention of Convocation; and with a view to this object it has been recommended by the Upper House, "That in new Churches generally, and in existing Churches, where the adoption of such a practice would not excite jealousy or opposition, weekly collections should be made for these purposes, that so even the poorer members of the Church may have the opportunity of contributing on the Lord's day according as God hath prospered them."

Supposing, however, that the Offertory is unobjectionable

⁹ See a work, entitled, "How shall we Conform to the Liturgy of the Church of England?" By the Rev. J. C. Robertson, M.A., 1843, p. 104.

in principle, and claims on its behalf this high authority of Scripture and the Church, what, it may be inquired, would in all probability be its practical results? Is there reasonable ground for the expectation that it would produce that augmentation in the Church's funds, which would enable her to provide better than she does at present for the spiritual instruction of our augmented population? Is there not, on the other hand, some reason to apprehend, that the restoration of the practice would be so distasteful to the majority of Churchmen in the present day, that even the augmentation of our funds for spiritual purposes might possibly be purchased at too high a price?

Here, then, let me distinctly state that, in thus bringing the subject before you, it is very far from my intention to counsel an immediate and universal restoration of the Church's rule under adverse circumstances, or to recommend any rash and precipitate action in reference to this practice. Even that which is right in itself, if it has long been discontinued, is apt to be regarded with suspicion by persons who have not considered the grounds on which it rests; and, if hastily resumed, would very probably be regarded as a novelty, though, in fact, it might be as old as Christianity itself¹.

It is, however, equally true that where prejudices exist in respect to a matter which is intrinsically right, those prejudices may often be overcome by the possession of additional information, especially if it be communicated in a spirit of forbearance, and with a careful avoidance of every thing that may prevent a calm and dispassionate investigation. I have, therefore, thought it advisable to invite your attention to this question, that it may receive your candid consideration, and that through you such

¹ See the evidence of Archdeacon Jones before the Committee on the Means of Divine Worship in Populous Places. Nos. 5875—5879. 5890. "On what is that prejudice founded? First, it is new; they have not been accustomed to it," &c. 5878.

information may be conveyed to your parishioners as may gradually enlighten the public mind, and prepare the way, if it may be, for a general compliance with the rule, which, under present circumstances, it might not be expedient in all cases to attempt. Discussion can only help to dispel prejudice, and advance the cause of truth. If we wish the Laity to assent to the restoration of the Offertory, we must at once consult their feelings, and appeal to their reason. But if, instead of adopting this prudent course, we endeavour to force compliance with a rule, which they may consider obsolete; if we will not explain to them as reasonable men the grounds and motives of our conduct; if, instead of seeking to draw them with the bands of love, we arrogate to ourselves a priestly authority, incompatible with *their* rights as men, and as members of the Church, we shall certainly fail not only in this, but in every other good work.

Upon the question of probable results we may find, to say the least, considerable encouragement in facts that have actually occurred under very various circumstances. The system has been tried; and a large number of cases tends to the conclusion that where the Offertory has been wisely and discreetly introduced, it has not only not been attended with any evil consequences, but has called forth in a remarkable degree the sympathies of the people. And this has been the case not only in large and wealthy towns, but also in small rural parishes, where the population consisted solely of labourers and farmers. In the city of Manchester, to quote the words of the Coroner for that city, "a monthly collection from the whole congregation has for many years been adopted in those Churches which are the most opposed to what is called the High Church." . . . "A meeting of the Churchwardens" (of the several parishes) "was summoned by the Senior Churchwarden, and resolutions were adopted by the meeting strongly recommending the use of the Offertory as frequently as possible from the whole congregation, and

the devotion of it to charitable purposes²." During the last two months of 1857 great distress prevailed in Manchester in consequence of the stagnation of trade. To meet this difficulty, resort was had to the weekly Offertory; and so successful was the appeal, that from one congregation alone 1000 persons received weekly relief³. It may be thought, perhaps, that this was an exceptional case, and that in the majority, whether of poor town parishes or small agricultural parishes, the system must of necessity fail. But here, again, we can reply, that the result in many such parishes has succeeded beyond expectation. In one of the poor District Churches of Bethnal Green 122*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* were collected by the weekly Offertory in twelve months; and the congregation, consisting of poor persons, manifested no objection to it, till their minds were poisoned by the notion that it was part of a system intended to hand them over to the Church of Rome⁴. The Incumbent of St. Peter's⁵, Stepney, having in his parish 14,000 persons, of whom 12,000 at the least are labouring men, dock-labourers, weavers, costermongers, and day-labourers of various kinds, pays the expenses of his Church, by an Offertory four times a year, with the full consent of the Churchwardens. The people, he says, are most eager to pay it. Every week he has a collection at the Offertory from the communicants, and a general Offertory once a month. The people think this mode of offering

² Evidence of E. Herford, Esq., before Committee on Spiritual Destitution. 5668.

³ I take this information from the "Literary Churchman," March 16, 1858, the Editor of which inserts the qualification, "if we rightly read his (i. e. the Rev. T. Todd's) statement."

⁴ Evidence of W. Cotton, Esq., Committee as above, 66—74. 143, 144. Rev. H. Vivian, Incumbent of St. Bartholomew's, Bethnal Green, who says he gave it up "because it produced so little," speaks of its being opposed "as a matter of Popery," but adds, that "there are several Churches known to him, as St. Matthias, Stoke Newington, where it has been tried with success." 406. 411, 412.

⁵ Rev. T. J. Rowsell.

their gifts more sacred. There is not one that does not wish that all collections should be made at the Offertory⁶.

With respect to agricultural parishes, very many Clergymen have had proofs of its success. In the very small Parish of Hawsworth, Northamptonshire, containing only 171 people, the whole sum collected by weekly and special Offertories was 28*l.* 12*s.* 6¼*d.*; the weekly average of copper, the poor man's gift, being 1*s.* 2¼*d.*; the whole amount offered in copper, being 3*l.* 6*s.* 6½*d.*⁷ Of the sum total, 17*l.* were given to the Missionary work of the Church instead of 9*l.* 10*s.*, which the parish had contributed in former years, and this without abstracting any thing from the poor. Other instances of similar success might be mentioned⁸, but I will confine myself to our own diocese. In one small parish, containing 138 people⁹, of whom "nearly half" are stated to be dissenters, the late Vicar informs me that the experiment succeeded beyond his hopes. All classes contributed, and in as just proportion as could be desired. Very nearly one-half of what was collected was in sixpences, fourpences, and copper. The total sum collected in this small parish, during the first year, was 26*l.* 4*s.* 1½*d.* In the Cathedral,

⁶ Nos. 886—888. 929—936. Evidence, &c., as above.

⁷ See "The Right Way the Best Way; or, a Plea for the Weekly Offertory." By Rev. G. H. Smythan, Rector of the Parish. J. H. and J. Parker, 1858.

⁸ East Bradenham, Norfolk, is a small agricultural Parish of 422 people, with a few well-to-do farmers, but no resident squire. It had been customary to have about two collections after the sermon in the year, two pounds after each being considered a good collection. Since the restoration of the weekly Offertory 14*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.*, exclusive of that at the Holy Communion, have been collected in lieu of the former 4*l.*; and the Offertory at the Communion, instead of being diminished, amounts to 8*l.* 13*s.* 5½*d.* These facts are stated in a letter, signed George R. Winter, in the "Guardian," Dec. 21, 1859. In Clare Market Chapel, London, the alms given in six months have amounted to 30*l.*, mainly in pence and small coin, gladly contributed by the very poor. Vide Home Mission Field, vol. ii., No. 6, p. 9.

⁹ Llanvapley. In the second year it was 36*l.*, of which 23*l.* 10*s.* was given *solely* by the cottagers, 3 or 4 farmers, and an occasional visitor.

and in two at least of our small agricultural parishes, whenever the Lord's Supper is administered, the alms are collected from the whole congregation instead of from the communicants only. In one of these parishes, containing 313 people¹, where the celebration of the Holy Communion takes place six or seven times a year, the practice has had the effect of raising the collection from 7*l.* 2*s.* 10½*d.*, in 1853, to 14*l.* 9*s.* 7*d.*, in 1859. In the other the collection from the communicants only in 1847 was under twenty shillings, last year from the whole congregation it was 12*l.* 7*s.*²

It might lessen the prejudices of those who entertain them, if they would only consider the practice of the Church elsewhere, and of other Christian communities as well as our own. The Episcopal Churches in Ireland, Scotland, and America, have all, I believe, a weekly offering. In the Cathedral at Fredericton, the Offertory produces 300*l.* per annum, in addition to which a large sum has been raised by the same means for an endowment fund³. The offerings of a single congregation of Presbyterians in Edinburgh, St. George's Free Church, contributed by a moderately-sized congregation of the middle classes, for the year ending 21st March 1858, amounted to 5853*l.* 5*s.* In another congregation in Aberdeen, that of the West Free Church, to 1927*l.* 13*s.* 2*d.*⁴ If we look to our own immediate neighbourhood, we have the fact before our eyes, that Welsh dissent is almost entirely dependent upon the free-will offerings of the less wealthy classes of society. Are we then calmly to acquiesce in the conclusion, that Christian principle, if boldly appealed to by ourselves, would not produce a measure of the same success? Do we admit that our own influence is so powerless, that it is vain to make

¹ Bryngwyn, Monmouthshire.

² Penrhos, Monmouthshire.

³ I understood the Bishop to state this at a Committee Meeting of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

⁴ Scottish Ecclesiastical Journal, Jan. 20, 1859, p. 6.

the attempt? For my own part I cannot accept these conclusions. We may not succeed at first; if we act rashly we shall not succeed at all; but if we diffuse information on the subject, and pursue a right principle in a right way, I cannot but hope that by God's blessing we shall eventually succeed.

It may be said, perhaps, that where there are no funds arising from endowment, a spirit of this kind might justly be expected to animate a religious community, far more than in a Church endowed like our own. No doubt there is considerable force in the objection. But if the real facts of the case were generally understood, it would be felt that our own congregations should act upon the same principle. For the endowments of the Church, though much has been done of late years to make them more available than they were for the relief of spiritual destitution, are utterly inadequate to meet the wants of the population. We must, therefore, fall back upon the voluntary principle; not, indeed, committing ourselves exclusively to it, for experience proves that *that* would be productive of immense mischief; but enlisting on our side, so far as we can, the sympathies of our people, and by means of the voluntary principle supplementing the inadequacy of our permanent endowments. "Were voluntary offerings universal in your English Churches, *as they should be*," writes an eminent Minister in the Free Church of Scotland, "you could raise an immense revenue for the glory of God, and the service of the Church. In my congregation alone, where we collect voluntarily at both forenoon and afternoon worship, we receive about 500*l.* annually of voluntary offerings, and this besides raising about as much from pew-rents, and about 1100*l.* for a fund out of which all the Ministers of the Free Church receive an equal share. That fund, to which congregations give according to their ability, amounts to about 100,000*l.* a year. The income of the Free Church, all voluntary, is about 300,000*l.* annually; and if we in our poor country—poor as compared with England—raise such

a sum as that from our share of the population, amounting to about 1,000,000, what might the Church of England do did she put forth her vast resources? Including one thing and another—I mean stipend and the value of a manse and garden—none of our Ministers have under 150*l.* a year. Unendowed as we are now by the State, we are better off than very many of the Clergymen of the Church of England. That shows what can be done through the voluntary offerings of the people⁵.”

It may be urged, again, that particular cases of success are no proof that the revival of the system would elsewhere, much less that it would universally, be followed by the same result; and we are bound to admit that cases of failure are on record, as well as of success⁶. We must, then, be prepared for disappointment in particular instances. But let us hope that in very many, the voice of Holy Scripture, the practice of the Primitive Church, the plain directions of our own branch of it, and the cry of the untaught multitudes that surround us, and are calling aloud for help, may be allowed to prevail. That we ourselves may not be the cause of failure, let us take heed not to provoke opposition by indiscreet precipitation, and not to neglect such wise precautions as may tend to disarm prejudice and prepare the way for ultimate success.

With this view I recommend you carefully to explain the matter both in public and private, should any of you think it expedient to commence any movement of this kind. Endeavour to convince the judgment of your people of the validity of the grounds upon which you are proceeding; the spiritual necessities of the diocese; the duty of every professing Christian to give to God's service

⁵ Letter of Dr. Guthrie to E. Herford, Esq.

⁶ Dr. Burnet thinks it would not answer at Bradford, because the Churches have their own charities to support. He tried it, but only for a short time, and in bad times. Report of Committee of the House of Lords on Spiritual Destitution. No. 5530.

according to his means; the authority which this particular mode of gathering the alms of the faithful derives from Holy Scripture, and the directions of the Church; the success that has attended it elsewhere; the inexpensiveness of the collection, as compared with that incurred by other means; and, lastly, the immense amount that might be raised from the contributions of those who now give nothing at all to such objects—I mean the middle and poorer classes.

Be careful also to act as the Rubric directs, viz. in conjunction with the Churchwardens. The Laity constitute the great body of the Church, and the Churchwardens are their legal representatives. We are the servants of the Church for Christ's sake; and although in things purely spiritual we are to maintain our independence, it is impossible to say what hindrances we may throw in our own way if we repel the Laity from our counsels, and refuse to recognize them as fellow-workers with ourselves in the kingdom of Christ.

An excellent layman⁷, in his examination before the House of Lords, being asked the question, "Have you known many instances in which they (the Clergy) have not communicated with the Churchwardens with respect to the Offertory?" replies, "I know many instances;" and, in answer to another question, "I attribute the discontinuance of the Offertory (which has never been discontinued in America or in Ireland) to the want of communication on the part of Clergymen with the Churchwardens, and to *their*" (i. e. the Churchwardens) "not feeling interested in the Offertory⁸. Instead of depriving the Laity of that measure of interference which they are by law entitled to, even self-interest, to say nothing of kinder and holier feelings, would suggest that wherever their co-operation is tendered or may be secured, it should be most gladly and thankfully accepted.

⁷ W. Cotton, Esq.

⁸ Committee on Spiritual Destitution, 73, 74. 144.

You will do well also, if you restore this custom, to print and circulate among your Parishioners an exact account of all monies received and distributed in each successive year. It is due to others that you should render an account of your stewardship. It is due to yourselves that your good should not be ill spoken of, and that no one should have the opportunity of pleading your want of communicativeness, and perhaps the suspicion of misappropriation, as a reason for withholding his support.

In discussing the question of the Offertory with respect to its probable results, I have hitherto regarded it only as a means of augmenting the resources of the Church, with a view to the spiritual instruction of our increasing population. But, independently of such a consequence that might follow from it, I cannot but think that compliance with the Church's rule might very largely promote among our people a conviction of the Christian obligation of habitually devoting some portion of their substance to the Lord's service, and thereby become a means of promoting also their own spiritual welfare. I say habitually, wishing to contrast a fixed habit with momentary impulse and excitement, which are not calculated to exercise so beneficial an influence on the donors of the gift. The present age is an age of luxury and expense. It offers great temptations to all classes to live quite up to, if not beyond, their incomes. Whenever this is done, it has a tendency to generate selfishness, and to harden the heart against the legitimate claims of our fellow-creatures. The charitable society appeals in vain to the man who is spending as much as, or more than, he can afford. The occasional sermon leaves the heart of such an one unmoved, or if it excite a transient emotion, his better feelings are accompanied with regret that his money is forestalled, and therefore cannot be given to God. The Offertory would be to such an one a constant memento that God and His service must be put in the first place; and who can tell how vast might be our growth as a spiritual house, a holy

nation, were He thus enshrined in the hearts and affections of our rich and our poor, our merchant princes, and the less wealthy, who form the great bulk of our congregations? For to these latter also it would be a monitor, which the English Churchman of low degree does not at present possess. The tradesman, the mechanic, and the labourer, if he be a dissenter, is distinctly taught that, as a professing Christian, he must contribute upon a fixed system to the support of his Church. Our parochial associations on behalf of foreign missions are beginning to teach our own poor the same lesson; but it is not yet brought into sufficient prominence. Were the Offertory restored, it would speak alike to all, perpetually bringing home the question to the rich man, "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" and constantly suggesting to the poor those gracious words, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

At each of my former Visitations I have called your attention to the expediency, as it appeared to me, of adopting some kind of missionary agency for the spiritual benefit of the colliers and miners of our mineral districts. My own convictions, that something more than the ordinary ministrations of the Church is imperatively demanded by the peculiar circumstances of our case, have been greatly strengthened by the fact, that in the dioceses both of Durham and Exeter, which, in some respects, resemble our own, the same necessity has been felt; and steps have been contemplated, if not actually undertaken, under the sanction of the respective Bishops of those sees, with a view to supply it⁹. In our own diocese the idea has at

⁹ See Charge addressed to the Clergy of the Diocese of Durham in 1857, by the present Archbishop of York, then Bishop of Durham; and a printed

last been embodied in a substantive form; and a Clergyman, of suitable qualifications, having offered himself for the work, the experiment is now being actually tried. In framing the instructions by which the missionary is to guide his proceedings, it has been laid down as a fundamental principle, that an agency of this description, when proceeding from the bosom of the Church, should be regarded as altogether subordinate to our parochial system, and used as a means of eventually promoting it. The missionary, therefore, has been directed to consider himself as in no respect opposed to, but only as supplementary to the parochial Clergyman; to cultivate in every possible way a brotherly feeling with him, not entering any parish without having first obtained his written consent, and not attempting to minister in any part of the parish which he forbids¹. For the assistance which has generously been tendered to me by Christian friends both within and without the diocese for the furtherance of this object, I beg to express my grateful acknowledgments. As we have at present only appointed one missionary, we cannot reasonably expect any large results. Should the experiment be found to answer, it may be tried hereafter on a larger scale.

There is one other matter of local interest to which, before I proceed to some more general topics, I must request your attention.

You will be happy to know that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have at last taken a preliminary step towards making the arrangements, which have so long been in contemplation, respecting the apportionment of patronage among the Bishops of the Welsh sees, and have determined that the patronage of thirty-one benefices shall be transferred from the Bishops of Bangor and St. Asaph

Statement, entitled, "The Exeter Diocesan Home Mission, for aiding Cases of Spiritual Destitution within the Diocese."

¹ See Appendix II.

to myself and my successors. As the letter of the statute, by which this apportionment is enjoined², would have assigned not thirty-one only, but sixty-four benefices to the see of Llandaff, it is due to myself thus publicly to state, that I did not silently acquiesce in the arrangement, but took every means in my power to prevent what I regarded as an injury about to be inflicted on the clergy of this diocese. At the same time it is right to mention that there were some peculiar difficulties in the case, and that a liberal construction had previously been given to the words of the Act of Parliament, in reference to the comparative claims of the bishopric of Durham, and the other sees in the Province of York; so that a departure from the strict interpretation of the rule, laid down for the guidance of the Commissioners in this matter, was not without precedent. The disappointment that would be felt by the clergy of North Wales, and the evils that were thought likely to result from giving to a Bishop of Llandaff so great an influence in the Northern Dioceses as might have followed, if a larger amount of patronage had been abstracted from the Bishops of those sees, were deemed by the Commissioners enough to outweigh any advantages that would have accrued to ourselves from a stricter application of the letter of the Act. To these considerations, especially the latter, I should have been disposed to attach so much weight as to induce me readily to consent to what I could have regarded as an equitable arrangement; but I cannot think that they furnished any sufficient reason for withholding from us one-half of the preferment which the relative magnitude and importance of this diocese entitled us to expect.

Among the matters of general interest to the Church that have been agitated since the last Visitation, the proposed Revision of the Translation of the Holy Scriptures, and of the Book of Common Prayer, must be deemed by

² 6 & 7 Will. IV., cap. 77, § 1.

far the most important in their bearings upon its future welfare.

With regard to the first of these questions it is not my intention to trouble you with any observations. For with the exception of a motion which was proposed at the monthly Board of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, I am not aware that any public action has been taken upon it.

The second, however, stands upon a very different footing. For it has on two occasions been brought in a substantive form before the Upper House of Parliament³, when it was proposed to present an Address to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to appoint a Commission of Inquiry, with a view to alterations and supposed amendments in the Book of Common Prayer⁴.

On both these occasions I considered it my duty, as did all the rest of my Right Reverend Brethren, to support the amendment proposed by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, rejecting the motion for the address. In taking this step, it was not the intention of the most Reverend Prelate, nor of the Bishops who supported him,

³ May 6, 1858, and May 8, 1860.

⁴ The terms of Lord Ebury's resolution on the last occasion were:—

“That it is the opinion of this House, that whereas the particular forms of Divine Worship, and the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own nature indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged, it is but reasonable that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigency of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein as to those that are in place of authority should from time to time seem either necessary or expedient:

“And whereas the Book of Canons is fit to be reviewed and made more suitable to the state of the Church:

“And whereas it is desirable, as far as may be, to remove all unnecessary barriers to a union of the people in the matter of Public Worship:

“That a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to be pleased to appoint a Commission to prepare such alterations and amendments in the Canons and Book of Common Prayer as to them may appear desirable, and to consider of such other matters as in their judgment may most conduce to the ends above mentioned.”

to imply that in their opinion the Book of Common Prayer is absolutely perfect and incapable of improvement. For my own part I should greatly regret it, if I were conceived to have no sympathy with the feeling that prompted the noble Lord to raise the question; and more especially that I had no desire to promote that "union of the people in the matter of Public Worship," the furtherance of which was put prominently forward by his Lordship as a reason for the address. Whatever we may think of the *matter* of the Prayer Book, the formularies in which its doctrinal statements are embodied, are confessedly of human origin, and as such, must of necessity be subject to human infirmity. Supposing them, moreover, to have been perfectly adapted to the feelings and circumstances, the ideas and phraseology, of the age in which they were composed, it would by no means follow, even then, that after the lapse of centuries they must, as a matter of course, possess the same appropriateness to those of the present day. With regard to the length, or, as it was called in the Millenary Petition⁵, "the longsomeness of the service," it has been said that the complaint is rather an indication of the want of a devout and spiritual mind on the part of the complainant, than of any excess or superfluity in the service itself. This may, perhaps, be readily conceded. But then it may be replied, that our congregations include not only those who have their spiritual senses exercised by reason of use, but also those who are only babes in Christ; not only men of a devotional habit, but those also whom we wish to train that they may become devout. Neither are physical considerations to be left entirely out of the account. In this, as well as in doctrinal disputes, they that are strong might do well to bear the infirmities of the weak: remembering that we have to provide not only for the healthy and able-bodied, but also for the old and delicate; for the child, whose affections we wish to attract rather than

⁵ Presented to King James I., in 1604.

to repel, as well as for the man of perfect age. The amalgamation of offices, not intended perhaps at first to be combined⁶, and which were designed each one to have a certain completeness within itself, could hardly fail to lengthen the time spent in Public Worship, and to introduce repetitions, which the most zealous advocate for the integrity of the Prayer Book would not venture to defend on the ground of their being essential to its usefulness. These repetitions, it is well known, are the frequent subject of complaint; and it would be some concession to those who wish for a shorter service, if they were removed.

In addition, however, to the very inferior considerations of the alleged length of the service, and of what are called needless repetitions, with a few other matters which affect the external structure rather than the internal character of the Book, as for instance, whether its Calendar of Lessons is susceptible of improvement, whether certain archaisms in its language should be translated into more modern phraseology, whether the Psalter might be so arranged as to provide for a third service in the day—in addition, I say, to such matters as these, a question of infinitely greater importance is suggested by the project of a Revision of the Book of Common Prayer; the object of such a revision purporting to be the removal of “all unnecessary barriers to a union of the people in the matter of public worship.” What, then, it may be asked, are we to understand by unnecessary barriers? Inasmuch as community of worship, i. e. of sincere and spiritual worship, can only take place among those who have the same religious faith, the hindrances to such a union must be found not in mere forms of worship, nor in the needless repetition of a creed or of a state prayer, but in some expression of religious doctrine, the belief or disbelief of which keeps men aloof one from the other, and drives them to the formation of separate bodies. Is, then, the revision of the Liturgy intended to

⁶ Professor Blunt thinks it doubtful. See *Sketch of Reformation*, &c.

comprise doctrinal, as well as rubrical, and other formal alterations? Is it proposed that, for the sake of peace, we should alter the creed of our Church so far as it is embodied in our forms of prayer? And is there any probability that if we were to attempt to unite the people by making our services speak a different language from that which they have uttered in the hearing of our forefathers—omitting or modifying certain expressions, against which objections have been raised—we should succeed in the attempt? These, my Reverend Brethren, are very grave questions, which you will no doubt ponder well before you commit yourselves to any expression of opinion, with a view to the exercise of any influence you may possess upon the determination of this important subject. The conclusions at which I have arrived in respect to them, after giving them the best consideration in my power, I shall now endeavour to lay before you.

That our Church from the very time of the Reformation has comprehended within her bosom two parties, holding, as we believe of the great majority of them, the same essential truths, but in some respects regarding that truth from a different point of view—the one inclined rather to a contemplation of the objective (as it is called), the other of the subjective aspect of Christian doctrine—the one jealous for what it regards as traditional and authoritative, the other claiming a much freer exercise of the right of private judgment—the one, in short, those whom we commonly understand by the designation of High, and the other of Low, Churchmen—that such a distinction has existed from the very first, must be admitted by all who have the slightest pretensions to an acquaintance with our Ecclesiastical History.

Not that such distinctions are peculiar to the Church of England. Originating, as they do, in the different natural constitution of different minds, and fostered by circumstances, such as birth, education, and social position, they necessarily exist in every community; and wherever liberty

of thought is not kept down by the iron hand of ecclesiastical or political despotism, they will certainly appear. Even the Church of Rome has had its Franciscans and Dominicans, its Jansenists and Jesuits, diametrically opposed to each other on important points of faith.

Now it is the wisdom of a national Church to open its arms as widely as is consistent with the preservation and security of essential truth: not, indeed, to attempt to purchase peace by excluding from its teaching any one point of vital importance, nor by sanctioning any one erroneous opinion, however trifling it may appear, but by insisting *positively* only upon that which is distinctly revealed in Holy Scripture, or may be proved thereby, and abstaining altogether from matters of doubtful disputation.

It was in this spirit that the Articles of our Church were framed, and by their strict adherence to it they have commended themselves to devout and earnest Christians of other communions as well as our own; *not* that, as some have supposed, they express themselves with oracular ambiguity, purposely adopting terms upon which different persons might put, if they pleased, different interpretations, but that they confine themselves to a distinct enunciation of the great cardinal truths which inspired Scripture directly affirms, or which the Universal Church has in all ages concluded from it; carefully abstaining from all those metaphysical subtleties, elaborate expositions, and dogmatic inferences, with which the more systematic theology of other religious bodies, diverging from the central point to the right hand or the left, has encumbered and perplexed the simple truth of God's Word.

The principle of our Reformation, as is well known, was *not* to depart as far as possible from the Church of Rome, but to cleanse our national Christianity from the corruptions with which that Church had defiled it, and to restore it to its primitive purity both of doctrine and worship. Upon this principle her Book of Common Prayer was

composed, or rather compiled⁷, by the eminent men who guided the movement. With a view to the satisfaction of that freedom of thought which the Reformation itself had called into action, certain alterations were made in 1552 in King Edward's first book of 1549; so that the later book, while it still retained what was primitive and Catholic⁸, was at the same time made, so far as it could be consistently with the principle of its original formation, wide and comprehensive⁹. That these alterations did not go far enough to meet the wishes of all whose feelings were in the direction of change, is unquestionable. But they were sufficient to satisfy the wise and moderate, who could appreciate the necessities of the case, and make allowance for the opinions of others instead of insisting on a rigid conformity with their own¹.

⁷ From the mediæval, corrected by the primitive liturgies. See Professor Blunt's Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge in November, 1849, Sermon IV., p. 95.

⁸ Nos quidem, uti diximus, de mutanda religione nihil temere aut insolenter, nihil nisi cunctanter, et magna deliberatione fecimus . . . Etsi enim discessimus ab illa Ecclesia, quam isti appellant Catholicam, . . . tamen id satis est nobis (satisque esse debet homini prudenti et pio, et de æterna vita cogitante) nos ab ea Ecclesia discessisse quæ errare potuerit, . . . quamque nos ipsi oculis perspicue videbamus a sanctis Patribus, ab Apostolis, a Christo ipso, a primitiva et Catholica Ecclesia discessisse. Accessimus autem, quantum maxime potuimus, ad Ecclesiam Apostolorum, et veterum catholicorum Episcoporum, et Patrum, quam scimus adhuc fuisse integram, utque Tertullianus ait, incorruptam virginem, nulla dum idololatria, nec errore gravi ac publico contaminatam; nec tantum doctrinam nostram sed etiam Sacramenta, precumque publicarum formam ad illorum ritus et instituta direximus. Utque Christum ipsum, et omnes fere pios fecisse scimus, religionem ab istis turpiter neglectam et depravatam, ad originem et ad primordia revocavimus. Inde enim putavimus instaurationem petendam esse, unde prima Religionis initia ducta essent. Hæc enim ratio, inquit antiquissimus Pater Tertullianus, valet adversus omnes hæreses; id esse verum, quodcumque primum; id esse adulterum, quodcumque posterius.—Jewel, *Apologia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*.

⁹ See Cardwell's *History of Conferences*, Introduction, p. 4.

¹ Thus, for instance, Peter Martyr, writing on June 14, 1552, in a letter which distinctly speaks of existing differences, says, *Liber seu Ratio Rituum*

Can we then affirm, without hesitation, that the same comprehensiveness of spirit, the same largeness of Christian charity, has invariably been exhibited in our Book of Common Prayer, as it has been subsequently dealt with?

There are three periods in its history at which it has been subjected to revision since the publication of the second book of King Edward the Sixth, and to these it will be necessary to refer for an answer to the question.

The changes that were made in 1559, so far at least as doctrine was concerned; were undoubtedly intended to widen, and not to circumscribe the limits of English churchmanship. But the same cannot be said either with respect to the Hampton Court Conference in 1604, or the Savoy Conference in 1661. Those of the former were certainly not calculated to place the Puritan or Low Church party in more favourable circumstances: the latter "seemed designed," as the historian of these conferences has candidly observed, "to convince the Non-conformists that, instead of any wish to admit them to further power or privilege within the Church, there was a distinct and settled desire to exclude them²."

Ecclesiasticarum, atque Administrationis Sacramentorum est emendatus, nam inde omnia sublata sunt quæ superstitionem fovere poterant. Printed by Parker Society in "Writings of Bradford," p. 400. See the expression of Bradford's contentment, explained by a note from Fox, in the Society's edition of Bradford's Sermons, &c., p. 471, and of Latimer's, in their edition of his "Remains," p. 262. Bucer was consulted by Cranmer on the Book of Common Prayer in 1550. His favourable opinion is given in Strype's "Cranmer" [210], Oxford Edition, vol. i. p. 300.

Archbishop Whately, in his recent Charge, observes that, "it is a remarkable circumstance, and well deserving to be kept in mind, that those expressions in our baptismal and other services, which are by many persons complained of now, seem to have created no dissatisfaction for a great number of years (at the time of the Reformation and long after), during periods at which a very considerable portion of our clergy had more or less leaning towards Calvinistic views. It would seem as if some of the ministers of the Church now, had introduced a new sense of certain words, such as was unthought of by our ancestors, and that they now seek to remodel our formularies in conformity with this innovation." p. iv.

² Cardwell, *Conferences*, pp. 144. 386. Oxford, 1840. Mr. Alexander

That the stern dogmatism of the Scotch Presbyterians should have disgusted the monarch who took so prominent a part at Hampton Court, and that the Church party in 1661 should have been animated by no kindly feeling towards those at whose hands they had lately suffered such grievous persecution, can excite but little surprise. That they should have used their ascendancy "to depress the condition of the Non-conformists³," and actually to introduce changes into the Book of Common Prayer, not with a view to soften the prejudices and relieve the consciences of the sincere and pious, but, in order to widen the breach, and drive Christian men into open hostility, who, by contrary treatment, might possibly have been converted into faithful friends,—this could only be justified on the supposition that such changes were absolutely indispensable, and imperatively called for by the cause of truth. But no such necessity can be pleaded on their behalf. Even if *concession* had been deemed inexpedient, there could have been no need to aggravate the feeling of discontent and irritation by imposing upon them additional burdens. Such, however, was the course actually pursued, and the lamentable results of it are matters of history. The spirit embodied in the acts both of Church and State at that time was met by a determinate resistance, and to this day, in the separation of thousands of good men from

Knox thus speaks of what then took place. "A revision of the Liturgy being called for, the revisers seized the opportunity (contrary to what the public was reckoning upon) to make our formularies not more puritanic, but more Catholic. They effected this, without doubt, stealthily, and, to appearance, by the minutest alteration; but to compare the Communion Service, as it now stands, especially in its rubrics, with the form in which we find it previously to that transaction, will be to discern, that without any change of features which could cause alarm, a new spirit was then breathed into the Communion Service, principally by a few significant circumstances in the manner of conducting the business, which were fitted to impress the devout, though certain to be fully understood only by the initiated."—Remains, 3rd edit., vol. i., p. 59.

³ Cardwell, p. 392.

our pale, we are suffering the consequences of the secession that then took place.

Ought not the Church, then, it may be asked, to retrace her steps, and by a revision of her Liturgy, to remove the grounds of offence which are now stated to exist between ourselves and those who dissent from us? Were it indeed the case that our Prayer Book, as is boldly affirmed by some who have put themselves prominently forward as the advocates for its revision, really needs a “vital and essential purification in matters relating to doctrine⁴,” any further discussion of the question must be altogether unnecessary: we should be bound at all hazards to reject the evil and retain only the good. Until, however, such a necessity shall be proved to exist, it is no less our duty to consider what would be the probable results, as respects both ourselves and others, of any attempt, under present circumstances, to alter and amend it; and by a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages that might follow from such an attempt, we must shape our course. If then it could be shown that by any concession of non-essential points, there was a reasonable hope of harmony being restored; did any means exist by which such changes could be made without danger to the Church; were we distinctly told by Non-conformists with what alterations they would—not one or two of them, here and there, but the great body of them—be satisfied, now that they have so long enjoyed what they deem their liberty, and have possessed a separate existence and organization; could these alterations be made without wounding the consciences of many of the present members of our Church, and possibly causing them to change places with those who have hitherto dissented from us; had we, in short, the ability to do what we are asked to do, without incurring the risk of causing even greater evils than those which now afflict us, under such circumstances, I should not

⁴ “Liturgical Purity our Rightful Inheritance,” by J. C. Fisher, M.A., of the Middle Temple, p. 20, edit. 2.

hesitate to say that it would be not only desirable, but our positive duty, to enter upon the work.

It is precisely because it cannot be shown that there is any reasonable probability of these conditions being now fulfilled, that, in common with the rest of my Right Reverend Brethren, I felt it to be my duty to resist the motion to which I have referred.

For, in the first place, if the matter were taken in hand, it could not be brought to any practical and satisfactory issue, from the mere circumstance that at present there exists no suitable machinery for executing the task. It was upon this ground, as it was stated by the ministerial leader⁵ in the House of Lords, that Her Majesty's Government had determined to lend no countenance to Lord Ebury's motion. A mere commission of inquiry and suggestion, which was all that was proposed, with no limitation or specific instructions, might have thrown the whole Church into a state of commotion fraught with the most perilous consequences. It might have helped to unsettle every thing, while in reality it would have had the power to settle nothing.

Supposing the Commission to have been appointed, and to have prepared such alterations and amendments, as to them might appear desirable, and to have reported upon other such matters as in their judgment might conduce to the end in view, and supposing further, that, as was proposed by the noble mover of the resolution, the Report had been submitted to Convocation, it is in a very high degree improbable that the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, which alone has been permitted hitherto to meet for the purpose of deliberation, even if it were deemed in its present constitution adequately to represent the clergy of its own province, so as to secure from *them* an acquiescence in its determinations, would be allowed to speak for the United Church of England and Ireland, and that its

⁵ The Earl of Granville.

conclusions would be accepted as those of the whole body. And even if this difficulty were overcome, nothing short of the Imperial Parliament could repeal the Act of Uniformity by which we are bound, and give the same authority to the revised book of Common Prayer that is possessed by the present. But who could contemplate such an issue as this without extreme apprehension? If indeed our Parliament consisted exclusively of men attached to the doctrine and discipline of the Church, thoroughly joined together in one heart and mind, and desirous only of amending in order to strengthen it and give it increased efficiency,—if its members were all qualified by theological attainment, and a spirit of patient investigation, to discuss and determine the various topics which such a question must necessarily bring before them,—if there were no violent conflict of religious feeling, no rubrical or doctrinal disputes disturbing the peace of the Church out of doors, and certain to be reproduced with the same intensity of feeling, or perhaps with still greater warmth, in the debates within,—if the limits within which the inquiry should range, could be strictly defined, and “*stare super antiquas vias*” would certainly be accepted by all as the binding principle upon points of doctrine,—then, perhaps, there might be some hope that the Report of the Commission, after its revision by Convocation, could be submitted to Parliament without the fear of greater inconvenience. But as all these conditions are wanting, who could venture to predict the result of such a reference? Is it not the part of wisdom under such circumstances to bear the ills of which some are disposed to complain, rather than by submitting our differences to a not altogether friendly, nor well-qualified arbitrator, to involve ourselves in the possibility of far greater evils which may be hidden from our view? It is not that we shut our eyes to the existence of imperfection, but that we know not how to remove the few blemishes that may be detected by a critical eye or a scrupulous conscience, without exposing ourselves to the risk of far greater mischief.

And this hesitation is very greatly increased when we consider the nature of the objections that are made to our Book of Common Prayer, and of the remedies that are suggested for its cure. Of the former not a few are the results of an inadequate acquaintance with the subject, and of the prejudices of which ignorance is the parent. For these the true remedy is to be found in better instruction. But until that greater knowledge is attained, misapprehension must continue to exist. The only concession that could satisfy would be a surrender at discretion of whatever might chance to be disapproved. Neither is it ignorance alone that lifts up its voice against our Book of Common Prayer. In this, as in so many other matters, we have to lament the influence of what Lord Bacon has called the “*Idola Specus*”⁶ upon the minds of men even of thought and information. Predetermined by circumstances to the support of their own theological system, and, in some cases, to a strong antipathy against opinions which they connect, and deem inseparably connected with the language of our services, notwithstanding all our explanations they continue to reiterate their objections, charging us with dogmas, which we hold to be no necessary inference from it, and which, in many cases, we should disclaim as strongly as they⁷. With respect to the more intelligent of the revisionists, perhaps there are scarcely two to be found, who would agree in their opinions as to what should actually be done. Numerous pamphlets have been published exhibiting the *beau idéal* of a reformed liturgy according to the conceptions of their respective authors. As in the Church at Corinth, “Every one hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation,

⁶ *Novum Organon*, xlii. Vol. ix. B. Montagu's Edition, p. 198.

⁷ “While minds capacious and independent as yours labour under such misapprehensions in regard to the Church of England and its doctrines, the hope of Church union will remain ideal.” Bishop of Adelaide to Mr. Binney. “*Lights and Shadows of Church Life in Australia.*” London, 1860. Appendix, p. 37.

hath an interpretation^s." But it has not yet been shown to be even a probability, that any one of these proposed revisions would either satisfy the non-conformists¹, or secure universal, or even general approbation within the Church itself. The probability is that a very large body, accustomed from their childhood to our existing services, would be quite as much disturbed by the loss of what they have so long had the privilege of enjoying, as the most zealous advocate for change professes to be by the present state of things. Neither is it to be supposed that attachment to our Prayer Book, as it now exists, exclusively resides in the breasts of one section of churchmen. The colony of Adelaide, as you are probably aware, was not long ago agitated by the question, whether it would not be possible and expedient for clergymen and the ministers of other religious communities occasionally to occupy each other's pulpits. Among those who strongly advocated the proposal was the Governor of the Colony, Sir R. G. Macdonnell, C.B. We cannot, therefore, imagine that that gentleman can be distinguished for any extreme rigidity of High Churchmanship; and yet in the course of the correspondence to which the question gave rise, he declared that, "sooner than abandon the simple liturgy of the English Church with a view to causing others by such concessions to amalgamate with his Church, or with a view to saving that Church from the persecutions of its opponents, rather than do so, he would go, as

^s 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

¹ Thus Mr. Binney, referring to "Church Questions," by the Rev. C. Robinson, LL.D.,—a publication calling upon all pious Dissenters to examine deliberately and dispassionately the terms which he proposes for their restoration to the communion of the National Church, and amongst other changes suggesting the omission of the word "Regeneration" from the Baptismal Service,—says, "Looking to his alterations in the Baptismal Service, it may be enough to say, that Dissenters would not, I suspect, regard them as sufficient—I speak more especially for Independents." "Lights and Shadows," &c., p. xxxviii.

the old Covenanters did, to the hill-side and fight it out²."

It is observable, also, how the appetite for change has a tendency to grow, and increase its demands. Not unlike the mischief-maker depicted by the poet,—

"Parva metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras,
Ingrediturque solo, et caput inter nubila condit."

When first the question of liturgical revision was started, we heard of little but a desire for abbreviation, and the avoidance of needless repetitions. But it was not long before we had an intimation that matters of vital importance might enter into the discussion. "He was quite certain," said the noble Lord who moved for the Commission, even in the first of his speeches, in May 1858, "that there was not one of their Lordships who did him the honour to listen to him, who would not rejoice if, by the omission or alteration of some phrases of doubtful import, we should be able to include in our communion a Livingstone or a Havelock³." That such excellent men, as Dr. Livingstone or Sir H. Havelock, should not belong, or have belonged, to our communion, can only be matter of regret to every true churchman. But the omission or alteration of a few phrases of doubtful import, has nothing to do with the fact of their nonconformity. The logical inference from his own suggestion was most probably not present to the mind of the speaker, when he gave utterance to these words. But the allusion, if it had any force at all in reference to the question under debate, could only imply that it would be expedient so to remodel our services, as in the one case to give up Infant Baptism, which we think ought in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ⁴; and, in the other, to renounce Episcopal Government,

² Speech on 20th October, 1858. Pamphlet, published at Adelaide, 1858.

³ Times. Report of the debate.

⁴ Article XXVII.

which we believe to have been the constitution and polity of the Church from the time of the Apostles, and in every subsequent age.

The language of dissenters themselves is certainly very little calculated to encourage the pleasing expectation, that a modification of the phraseology of the Book of Common Prayer in reference to points which we should deem non-essential, would have the effect of bringing back to our communion those who now stand aloof from us. "Schemes of comprehension," says an eminent Congregationalist minister, "plans for the coalition of different bodies, the reduction of some to the bosom of another, or their subjection to its dominion,—these once had their day; they were talked of, suggested, proposed, and died: died, as it was thought, never to live again. And they never will. Any attempt to revive and resuscitate them will be in vain. The divisions into sections of the Christian Church, the existence of distinct Protestant Evangelical denominations, must be accepted as a great fact. It must be dealt with as such. It is no matter who was right or who wrong at the time of the original dispute—unless, indeed, the subject of dispute still exists, and is on either side regarded as vital. As to sectional divisions on the ground of forms and modes of administration and discipline, these are most likely inseparable from the condition of the Church in the present world. . . . If it were possible for all Protestant Evangelical denominations to be fused together into one Church to-day, and as such to have a fresh start, it would be split into innumerable divisions to-morrow. . . . As to supposing that thousands and tens of thousands of professedly free men, composing numerous and influential religious denominations, with principles, organizations, and customs established and in action—mighty living powers—to suppose that these could all be brought to coalesce and amalgamate, to give up, in some measure, their separate existence, and to agree and consent to some species of uniform rule . . . for any use it cannot be seriously

entertained: to discuss it would be a waste of words; you might as well discuss the restoration of the Heptarchy⁵.” “It is too late for any particular Church to seek to absorb all others into itself⁶.” Such is the deliberate conclusion of a highly respected Congregationalist minister after thirty years of ministerial and metropolitan life⁷; of one who describes himself as having a leaning towards a liturgical service, and convictions, and preferences, which would render an episcopal rule no objection and no burden to him⁸; who elsewhere admits the many attractions from preference, taste, judgment, expediency, which draw non-conformists towards the Anglican Church⁹; whose error, in the opinion of his brethren, has been that his sympathies with the Church, both as to its organic structure and mode of worship, have gone too far, been too ardent, and a little indiscriminating¹; who has once and again acknowledged that he seldom hears the beautiful service of our Church devoutly and appropriately conducted, without tears². Unless, therefore, we are prepared by alteration or omission so to transform our Prayer Book, as to bring its doctrinal character entirely into harmony with the views of the non-conformist body, and expose ourselves to all the perilous consequences of such a change, we may well leave out of our calculation the probable effect of a Liturgical Revision upon dissenters. The simple consideration is that of duty and conscience. “The first and great thing,” says the same writer whose words I have just quoted, “is for every Church to do what is right, because it is right: to alter and amend whatever needs to be altered or amended, not with the aim of attracting others, but from the desire to be in harmony with truth³.” Let us faithfully adhere to this principle. If by so doing we cannot conciliate dissenters, we shall at least secure their respect.

⁵ “Lights and Shadows,” &c., pp. 55—57.

⁶ Ibid. p. xliii.

⁹ Ibid. p. 105.

⁷ Ibid. p. 104.

¹ Ibid. p. 116.

³ Ibid. p. 114.

⁸ Ibid. p. 70.

² Ibid. p. 135.

You are aware that a petition signed by 460 clergymen was presented in the course of last year to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council, praying for the appointment of a Commission to revise the Book of Common Prayer. These petitioners, after pointing out the particulars which had occurred to their own minds as capable of improvement, proceeded to state, that "other alterations might be alluded to both in the body and the rubrics of the Liturgy, which must readily suggest themselves as the work proceeds;" so that if their prayer should be listened to, we are to embark on an unknown sea without chart or compass, and be driven we know not upon what rocks or quicksands, because certain parties are not quite content with our Book of Common Prayer, to which all the Revisionists who are clergymen, as was the case with these petitioners, gave, as the condition of their ordination, their unqualified assent and consent, so that *they* at least cannot be supposed to have *on principle* any serious and conscientious objection to its expressions or injunctions. And even if it should be said that by these portentous words "other alterations must readily suggest themselves as the work proceeds" the petitioners referred only to matters of arrangement, not of doctrine, it is not quite certain that other practitioners will be satisfied without subjecting the patient to a far more severe and dangerous treatment. Indeed, the spirit that has already been evoked by the agitation of the question, is quite sufficient to deter any one who would gladly concur in a moderate and well-considered scheme of revision, from daring to enter upon the work; and, if I may judge of the feelings of others by my own, is the main hindrance to the project. The cry for Liturgical Revision, if faintly uttered by those who would abridge or re-arrange our services, is echoed in a louder strain by another class of Reformers, who tell us that they contain fundamental error, and that this error must be expunged. A writer of considerable ability, the author of a work, entitled, "Liturgical Purity our Rightful

Inheritance⁴," boldly advocates changes, which, as he admits, would certainly "modify in some degree the present doctrinal character of the Prayer Book." And this he does not only on the ground of the changes in 1662, but also because he considers that the compilers of the Book of Common Prayer were not sufficiently freed from the superstitious opinions of the Church to which they had recently belonged.

Neither are these sentiments confined to the author of that volume. Another writer, who describes himself "as a member of the body of English clergy, giving in his adhesion to the standard which Mr. Fisher has planted in the cause of Revision of our invaluable Liturgy⁵," and who quotes, with approbation, the remark that this book "is calculated to render no common service to the cause of liturgical purity, by habituating the minds of men to those ideas of reform from which they are apt to shrink in suspicion or dislike," recommends that a popular agitation—for the purpose of carrying out his own and Mr. Fisher's opinions upon doctrinal questions—should be commenced. "In the present state of society," he says, "in this country most things great either originate with, or depend upon, a free people, who work one arm of the Legislature for themselves, and constitute a main part

⁴ Preface. See above, p. 47, note 4. "The lengthened, and, as some may think, severe remarks which . . . we have thought it needful to make upon the terms of the Ordinal in its present form are doubtless . . . applicable, in a very considerable degree, to the structure of that Formula as it was originally framed by Cranmer; for those unwarrantable, and—as they may well appear to many minds—almost blasphemous, pretensions to the power of forgiving sins, which, then as well as now, the Priest was supposed to acquire as part of his sacerdotal commission, will be found in the earlier as well as in the later form; and it is quite evident that no mere return to the original service of 1552 can ever satisfy those who desire to see our Ritual made strictly conformable to the unerring standard of Scripture," p. 328. 2nd Edition.

⁵ "Thoughts on the Liturgy." By the Rev. Philip Gell, M.A. Preface.

of the visible Church of Christ in the land That such a people should be content to have their spiritual affairs ordered for them as by canon law, and be denied progressive changes therein, while they are continually obtaining them in civil matters, seems to be a thing inconceivable and impossible. On political subjects and affairs of state they think and speak out; they ask and have,—why not on matters of religious interest also? Improvements do not appear likely to be obtained in any other way; and with the religious intelligence that abounds among them (Popery and infidelity notwithstanding), the progress they may successfully contend for and obtain will not be dangerous to the interests of true religion, but highly favourable to them⁶.”

The nature of the tribunal to which this Rev. Gentleman would refer the determination of the theological questions connected with the proposed revision of our Prayer Book, is not likely to diminish our satisfaction in the thought that Churchmen in general are “apt to shrink in suspicion or dislike” from his peculiar opinions. Recent events, too, if I am not mistaken, have taught us the melancholy result that would follow, were “matters of religious interest” submitted to “a free people,” having the cry of “No Popery!” sounding in their ears, and “Infidelity,” it is to be feared, in too many instances blinding their eyes.

While such sentiments, as I have just quoted, are put forward by our most zealous liturgical Reformers, on the one hand, and while, on the other, in spite of a miserable conflict which only a short time ago was converting one of the churches of the metropolis “into an habitual scene of outrage and blasphemy⁷,” we are told by the minister of that church, that “we shall never

⁶ “Thoughts on the Liturgy,” &c. Preface, p. iv.

⁷ “Sacrilege and its Encouragement.” By the Rev. Bryan King. 2nd Edition, p. 12.

succeed in teaching our flocks, and especially the poorer members of them, the deep doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, and the place which that Sacrament holds in the economy of Christian grace, as the one great act of worship and sacrifice offered by the Church to Almighty God, without the aid of such external adjuncts of ritual⁸,” viz., as the eucharistic vestments prescribed by the Rubric of the first Prayer Book of Edward VI.; while I say there exist amongst us men, who not only hold these opinions on one side or the other, but are determined, at all hazards, to force them upon others, without any consideration of the peace of the Church,—though I readily admit that these persons represent the very extreme limit of our differences, and trust there are but few that go so far—still I cannot but think that, while there is such a spirit of open antagonism between contending parties, each having its several supporters with their sympathies more or less enlisted on its side, the present cannot be deemed an auspicious moment for undertaking so perilous and delicate a work as the Revision of the Book of Common Prayer.

We cannot be surprised that, under such circumstances, a declaration has been signed by nearly 10,000 clergymen, that in their opinion “any attempt at the present time to alter the Book of Common Prayer would be attended with great danger to the peace and unity of the Church.” In remaining where we are there may, no doubt, be some inconveniences. But how much easier may they be to bear than the evils that may follow from the desire of change. To the Liturgy, as it is, we and our forefathers have given our assent. If we slip our anchor, and launch upon a stormy sea in search of a *terra incognita*, where a perfection not given to human compositions or arrangements is haply to be found, and where all parties and

⁸ “Sacrilege and its Encouragement.” By the Rev. Bryan King. 2nd Edition.

sections of the professing Church of Christ may possibly find their particular opinions so distinctly expressed, that every one will receive it with unqualified satisfaction, what tongue can foretell the point to which we may be borne by the winds and waves that may meet us in our course⁹? The noble Lord who introduced the subject of Liturgical Revision to the notice of the House of Lords, expressed his conviction on the first occasion of his doing so, that "any attempt to force alterations on the clergy of the Established Church which are distasteful, he would not say to the majority, but even to any considerable minority of them, would be as foolish as it would be fruitless." The question *has been* submitted to, and an answer obtained from nearly 10,000. With what consistency can he persevere in an effort which they have concurred in condemning as fraught with danger to the peace and unity of the Church?

The question of Church Rates still remains unsettled. But the divisions which took place in the House of Com-

⁹ At a meeting of the National Club on Tuesday, May 29, 1860, of certain clergymen and others, not belonging to the High Church party, the Chairman, R. C. L. Bevan, Esq., made the following very sensible remarks in concluding the proceedings:—"The discussion of the evening had furnished additional evidence of the inexpediency of the revisionist movement. He would, indeed, be glad of some alterations; but it was impossible to hear the variety of opinions which had been expressed, without feeling that they were not united enough to agree on such alterations as would be desired by Evangelical men. An endeavour had been made to show that the object might be effected by the omission of a word, or the discontinuance of a formulary; but those who threw out this suggestion forgot that the word 'regenerate,' in baptism, for instance, was one which the Tractarian party would make a vital question. Again this was an argument which might be used on the other side. What more simple, they might say, than to leave out the 'only' in reference to justification by faith *only*, or to omit the Seventeenth Article? On the whole, therefore, his conclusion was, that in this matter they were not united enough to agree upon any thing, and not powerful enough to get any thing done." To this excellent conclusion there is an obvious corollary. If one powerful party in the Church is not united enough to agree upon any thing, no change whatever could be expected to produce a general, much less a universal acquiescence.

mous upon this subject in the last session of Parliament, give good reason to hope that a better feeling in reference to it is beginning generally to prevail, and that the injustice of depriving the poor and needy of the right which they have enjoyed at the very least for 500 years, and probably for many more ¹, of having a place for divine worship kept in decent repair at the common expense, is seen at last in its true colours ².

The violence of the enemies of the Church in relation to this subject has in one most important particular been overruled for good. So long as dissenters were contented with that perfect freedom of opinion and action which the tolerant spirit of the age, and I may say of the Church also, readily concedes to all who think it their duty to secede from her communion, her friends also were content with the enjoyment of their own privileges, and felt themselves under no necessity of arming for her defence. It may be that they had not sufficiently observed the signs of the times, or had placed too strong a reliance on the justice of their own claims to suppose that attempts would be made to despoil her of the property she had for centuries enjoyed, or that, if such attempts should actually be made, they would not be at once and effectually repelled. Experience has unhappily proved that this generous confidence has been misplaced. The abolition of Church Rates has become the war cry of a party, who not only object to the particular payment being levied upon themselves, but distinctly avow that they regard the abolition of them only as a precursor of further invasions upon the Church's rights and property ³;

¹ See evidence of Mr. Toulmin Smith before the Committee of the House of Lords. No. 448. He refers the origin of Church Rates to A.D. 1370. The common opinion is that they may be traced to the time of Canute.

² In 1859, the second reading of the Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates was carried by a majority of 74; in 1860, of only 29; and on the motion for the third reading this diminished number dwindled down to 9. In the House of Lords, on June 19 of this year, the contents for the second reading were 31, the not contents 128.

³ "I quite believe that the concession of this question of Church Rates

and while they ostentatiously parade themselves as the friends of religious liberty, deem it inconsistent with a good conscience to allow others the liberty to pay the rate, which they are both willing and think themselves bound to do ⁴.

It is deeply to be regretted that many lukewarm churchmen, and some for whom we entertain a respect as sincere friends of the Church,—in the former case, it is to be feared, not unfrequently from political considerations ⁵ or an exaggerated estimate of the numbers and influence of dissenters; in the latter, we cannot but think, from a misapprehension both as to the rights of property and legitimate

would not satisfy the ultimate expectations, or I will say, if you please, requirements of Dissenters.”—Evidence of Mr. S. Morley, an Independent, before the Committee. No. 696. “I believe I am right in saying that the view you entertain in regard to Church Rates is, that a settlement of the Church Rate question would by no means settle the objects you have in view, but that there are ulterior objects which you wish to see accomplished, even although the question of Church Rates was settled to-morrow?” “Yes.”—Reply of C. J. Foster, Esq., LL.D., Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control. No. 1679, *ibid.* “That property which belonged to the Church at the time when this country was Roman Catholic, and which, by virtue of the Reformation, was vested in the Church since it became Protestant, *we should wish to deal with all that.*”—*Ibid.* No. 1510. Dissenters maintain that even if they were exempted from the payment of Church Rates, they would have the same right as at present to interfere with the Church. See “Lights and Shadows,” &c., p. xlvii.

⁴ “I understood you to say that . . . even if they (the dissenters) were relieved from maintaining the fabrics of the Established Church, they would still have further convictions which ought to be satisfied, and that simple relief would not be sufficient to satisfy that which they wish to see attained.” “I have no hesitation in saying that if a Bill were introduced into the House of Commons to-night, the object of which should be to charge upon Churchmen the support of their own places of worship, there would be opposition to it commenced to-morrow, which would be fatal to the measure.”—Mr. S. Morley. No. 797.

⁵ “I think that the question of Church Rates has been made for the last fifteen years a great source of what is commonly called political capital, and I think that we have no right to infer that the feelings of the people of England at all correspond with the noise which is made in both Houses of Parliament upon the subject.”—Right Hon. T. H. S. S. Estcourt, M.P. Committee on Church Rates, No. 958.

demands of religious liberty,—have made common cause with our adversaries in this matter.

The publication of the evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Lords upon the Church Rate question, has thrown a strong light—for the manifestation of which we cannot be sufficiently thankful—upon the motives by which those who are clamouring so loudly for the abolition of this payment are really influenced; proving, as it does, that if the abolition were conceded, it would only be regarded as an instalment of future spoliation⁶. It demonstrates, also, from actual experience, what would be its effects, not only upon the material structures of our churches⁷, but, which is of far greater consequence, upon the efficiency of the Church as the source of religious instruction and consolation to the poor⁸. The practical suggestions it contains upon one or two points, which constitute, in fact, the only real grievance in the existing law, all sound and right-minded Churchmen would readily agree to adopt.

No wonder that the publication of this evidence has awakened the friends of the Church to the conviction of the absolute necessity of adopting substantive measures for her defence, and not allowing judgment to be pronounced against her by default. In various parts of the kingdom Lay Associations have been formed, having for their object simply “to defend the Church from further encroachments upon her rights and privileges, and any spoliation or diminution of her revenues⁹.” In others it has been deemed expedient that a certain number of laymen, known to be well affected to the Church, should be invited by the Archdeacon or Rural Deans occasionally to meet the clergy in their several

⁶ Upon the ulterior views of Dissenters in this agitation, see Evidence, Nos. 698. 705. 723. 769, 770. 772, 773. 1509. 1583. 1679. 1696.

⁷ Upon the results in the dilapidation of churches where there is no rate, see Nos. 10. 123. 233, 234. 347. 352. 746. 1043. 1055. 1097. 1144. 1194. 1196.

⁸ See Nos. 238—241. 1280—1284. 1320—1322. 1806.

⁹ Circular of the Shrewsbury and Shropshire Church Defence Association.

deaneries, and that similar meetings should take place in the several parishes, under the superintendence of the parochial clergy, for the purpose of mutual consultation. With the consent and approbation of His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury and of the Bishops of London and Winchester, the metropolis has been divided into twenty districts, furnishing together 320 lay associates, to consult together in their respective districts upon matters connected with the interests of the Church, and once a year to hold a general meeting for the same purpose. So long as an organization of this nature is employed only for defensive purposes, and is not permitted to meddle with questions of doctrine or other matters calculated to occasion internal strife, it need not, I think, be regarded with suspicion or distrust. Were it to pass beyond those limits, there is no saying how soon it might involve us in an internecine war.

With respect to the diocese of Canterbury, His Grace has borne unequivocal testimony to the practical advantages of the recently-established system of lay co-operation, so far as experience has hitherto gone¹. In other dioceses also the same system has been adopted, and the results of the experiment are anxiously looked for.

In our own the subject has not been lost sight of, but at present we have not arrived at any determinate conclusions. That the educated part of the laity are willing to range themselves on our side, so far as is consistent with the maintenance of perfect toleration and kindly feeling towards others, we have many substantive proofs; and for several specific purposes, as Church Extension, Church Building, and Propagating the Gospel, we have associations in which they take a warm and active interest. But for the resistance of aggression upon the rights and properties of the Church we have no organization whatever. It is grievous to think that such an organization should be necessary, and that we should be compelled by any who call themselves

¹ See Chronicle of Convocation, Feb. 11, 1859, p. 7.

our fellow-Christians, to arm in her defence. But when her enemies band themselves together avowedly for the purpose of despoiling her of her property, and even of interfering with her ministrations², it is time for her friends seriously to ask themselves whether steps are not immediately to be taken to influence public opinion, and by means of mutual co-operation to concert such measures of resistance as circumstances may require. "Hitherto," observed one of the metropolitan churchwardens at a meeting of the London Association, "the laity of the Established Church have made little or no combined effort to stop the wayward course of those who would rob our sacred edifices of their ancient patrimony, degrade our clergy, and mar their usefulness. . . . The barriers which our forefathers placed around the Church are attacked by ruthless hands. If broken down, how could we replace them? Surely it will be admitted that a body of active men, laymen, will form the readiest and the fittest phalanx for their defence. In order to determine how the laity may be most conveniently organized for such purpose, let clergy and laity consult together, and I feel convinced that success is sure."

For the zealous exertions of our Christian laymen we cannot be sufficiently thankful. They give us the strongest assurance that our Church yet lives in the affections of our countrymen; that God will graciously preserve and purify her from every spot and stain, and make her the instrument of instructing our children and children's children in the truths of the Gospel, and of extending the kingdom of Christ throughout the world.

Permit me, however, Reverend Brethren, affectionately to remind you, that the permanence and efficiency of a National Church must, under God's blessing, depend, not

² "At a Meeting of the Anti-State Church Association held at Freemasons' Hall, June 1859, several M.P.s being present,—Sir S. M. Peto, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Mellor, and Mr. Baines,—it was agreed to agitate for the admission of dissenting ministers to officiate in rural churchyards."—Circular of Shrewsbury and Shropshire Church Defence Association.

upon any thing external to itself, but upon the purity of its doctrine and the character of those who minister at its altars. Upon the former of these, namely, purity of doctrine, our Church may well rejoice in the consciousness that she is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone ; that she acknowledges Holy Scripture alone as her rule of faith ; and that the doctrines which she holds to be necessary to salvation, on the ground of their being read therein, or capable of being proved thereby, are none other than those which the Church of Christ, as a witness and keeper of Holy Writ, has ever maintained, and handed down from primitive times. Upon this particular, then,—the doctrinal character of our Church,—there is no room for any anxiety. But the second of the points referred to is altogether personal in its nature, and as such may well demand our most serious consideration.

What then, Brethren, is *our* character in reference to the solemn trust committed to our hands? Do we heartily believe the doctrines of our Church? Do we breathe her spirit? Do we commend her by our example? Do we zealously labour to promote her cause? Are we in all things approving ourselves as ministers of Christ, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left³? Within our respective spheres of labour, do we declare the whole counsel of God, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus⁴? Such were the weapons with which the Apostle Paul fought the good fight of faith ; and such, if we would make full proof of our ministry as clergymen of the Church of England, must be *ours* also. The present are not days in which to content ourselves with the mere routine of official duty, nor

³ 2 Cor. vi. 6, 7.

⁴ Col. i. 28.

to satisfy ourselves with a blameless but insipid mediocrity of personal or professional character. An age full of activity demands of the ministers of religion the same earnestness, and zeal, and loftiness of purpose, of which so many examples are seen in every other class of society, and which are essential to success in every other profession. There is a higher appreciation of the sanctity and responsibility of the clerical office than there was in the past generation. By the very fact of our holding, we are expected to adorn it. A vicious clergyman is no where tolerated. An indolent and inefficient one is universally despised. In addition to this, an immense arrear of what is commonly called spiritual destitution, bequeathed to us by the indifference of past times, or the unavoidable result of the altered circumstances of many portions of the kingdom, has imposed a burden upon the Church which, with the most strenuous exertions of both laity and clergy, she can scarcely hope to overtake; and which, if it be not met with prompt and efficient measures, must become far more grievous, both in itself and its consequences, than it is at present. But how can we expect that the laity will devote themselves heartily to the task of increasing the material resources of the Church, if we, who are the living instruments to whom, under God, is committed the work of promoting her spiritual welfare, manifest by our conduct that we are mere men of the world; set apart, indeed, to be the ministers of God and stewards of the mysteries of Christ, but caring little about personal holiness, and giving little evidence that we are animated by the Spirit of Him whose name we bear? Well, indeed, may every lay churchman in this diocese remember the exhortation of our Saviour to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." And well may we, who are actually engaged in God's husbandry, put to ourselves the question, What manner of men ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Shall we neu-

tralize their zealous exertions, so far at least as *we* are concerned, by listlessness and indifference, not to say by sin and unrighteousness? Or shall we not rather join our prayers with theirs, that the means of spiritual instruction may be made coextensive with our wants; and that we ourselves may ever remember how great a treasure is committed to our charge, and be diligent to frame and fashion our own selves and our families according to the doctrine of Christ, and to make both ourselves and them, as much as in us lies, wholesome examples and patterns to His flock?

A petition which was lately presented to the Upper House of Convocation from the Mayor of Derby and a number of influential laymen resident in that place, though it contains some very exaggerated statements, and appears to have been composed in entire ignorance of the measures actually taken to prevent the intrusion of unworthy persons into the ministry of the Church, ought not, I think, to be overlooked, nor suffered to pass into oblivion without awakening in the clergy some very serious reflections. That the influential laity should take such an interest in the character of our body, as to have framed this petition with a view to secure us from reproach, is a matter of hearty thankfulness to Almighty God. That any thing should have occurred to make them imagine “that the sacred order of the ministry is continually receiving the accession of more persons of careless and ungodly lives” than “the venerable House” to which the petition was addressed, “can possibly be aware of;” that “many persons are from time to time ordained whose lives and conversation are notoriously opposed to the solemn profession required from them at their ordination, whereby great scandal is given to all earnest churchmen, and much ground given to the allegations of dissenters that holiness of living is not requisite in the priesthood of the Church;”—that a respectable body of lay churchmen should have imagined that there is any foundation for such a serious and painful charge as is involved in these words, cannot but occasion in the mind of

every one amongst us the very deepest regret. Let the bare fact then of such an impression having been made and thus publicly avowed, suggest to every one of us the earnest and solemn appeal, Lord, is it I? Have I individually, by my personal conduct or my public ministrations, done any thing calculated to create it? If the character of our order is thus impugned, there is no one member of our profession that can hope to escape from the general imputation. The matter then comes home to every one amongst us. For our own sakes, as well as for the sacred cause that is entrusted to our keeping, we are bound to keep ourselves pure. And permit me, Reverend Brethren, in connexion with this subject, to remind you, as I did on a former occasion, of "the solemn responsibility incurred by every one who by testimony, purporting to be founded upon personal knowledge, assists another in obtaining holy orders or any spiritual office⁵." The petitioners just referred to do not hesitate to say that "these testimonials are often given on a very partial acquaintance, and frequently on the representation of interested parties." It is to be hoped that, while thus complaining of the carelessness with which commendatory testimonials are given by the clergy, they did not allow themselves to disparage their clerical brethren without careful inquiry into any particular case that had awakened their suspicion. But it concerns ourselves to know that such a suspicion exists, and to take heed that no conduct of our own may tend to justify or confirm it. No testimonial can really be what it purports to be, unless it is founded on the personal knowledge of the subscriber. The party who signs it gives his pledge to the Bishop and the Church as to the truth of the statement. Unless, therefore, his testimony is confined to that which has fallen under his own observation, it is manifestly not what it pretends to be; and while it tends to deceive the party whom it is intended to influence, it cannot but entail guilt and disgrace

⁵ Charge, 1855, p. 55.

upon him who has signed it. "For the sufficiency of scholarship," says Fuller, speaking of a Bishop's practice in regard to ordination, "he goeth by his own eye. But, for their honest life, he is guided by other men's hands, which would not so often deceive him were testimonials a matter of less courtesy and more conscience. For whosoever subscribes them enters into bond to you and the Church, under a heavy forfeiture, to avouch the honesty of the party commended: and, as Judah for Benjamin, they become sureties for the young man unto his father. Nor let them think to void the bond and make it but a blank with that clause, So far forth as we know, or words to the like effect: for what saith the Apostle? God is not mocked⁶."

There is one further point bearing upon the credit of our profession, to which you must permit me also to advert, though I do so with some measure of pain and reluctance. The scandals to which these petitioners refer would, I am persuaded, in many cases be avoided, if incumbents would faithfully adhere to the principle of not allowing any one to serve in their respective parishes without the cognizance and full consent of the Bishop. I do not mean to say that in no instance whatever is a strange clergyman to be permitted to officiate without such sanction. Such a restraint would be alike inconsistent with the liberty that ought to be conceded to every one who is worthy to be entrusted with the cure of souls, and with the brotherly confidence which every Bishop must gladly repose in his clergy, and anxiously desire that his clergy should repose in him. But the case is very different with regard to an engagement for a continuous service. A Bishop has a right to know who are feeding the flock over whom he himself under Christ is the chief pastor. The law of the land requires a licence as the condition of such service, and the clergy above all others should set an example of cheerful obedience to what it prescribes. The clergyman of unimpeachable character

⁶ Fuller, *The Holy State*, Book iv. chap. 9.

has no need to keep himself aloof from the Bishop's observation, though he may well expose himself to suspicion, if he is persuaded to do so. Generally speaking, it is the man of blighted reputation, who shrinks from inquiry, and seeks to creep unawares into a diocese where he flatters himself that he is not known. Past experience may have taught him that a Bishop may be cognizant of his misconduct, though an incumbent may not have the same means of becoming so. Let me beg of you then on no account whatever to withhold from me immediate information with respect to any engagement of this nature. It is not from any wish needlessly to interfere with your liberty, much less from the supposition that you would knowingly introduce any unworthy persons into your several parishes, that I make this request. With no other feelings than those of pleasure and satisfaction can I look back upon the confidence which, during the nearly eleven years of our connexion, has subsisted between us. But still cases have occurred, I am willing to believe from want of consideration and nothing more, where evil might have been prevented, had the proper precaution been taken. It is our obvious duty to the Church to apply to this, as to every other particular, the Apostolic precept, "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed."

And now, Reverend Brethren, with a deep impression of the sacredness of the trust that has been committed to our care, a humble consciousness of our manifold deficiencies in past times, and a heartfelt conviction of our inability to execute our commission by any might, wisdom, or goodness of our own; with an earnest desire to make full proof of our ministry and a simple dependence upon the grace that is in Christ Jesus; with grateful hearts for the many tokens of the divine favour which have been vouchsafed to us for our encouragement, a humble ascription of the praise to Him unto whom alone it is due, and a joyful anticipation of the glorious reward which is promised for Christ's sake to the faithful shepherds of His flock; in a spirit of faith, hope,

and charity, let us return to our several spheres of labour ; and may the God of all grace, who has put us into the ministry, make us perfect in every good work, and enable us both to save ourselves and those unto whom He has appointed us to minister, through Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory now and for ever. Amen.

APPENDIX I.

NEW CHURCHES.

Glamorganshire.

Aberdare, St. Fagan's.
 „ St. Elvan's.
 „ Hirwain.
Cardiff, All Saints'.
Canton, St. John's.
Cwmavon, St. John's.
Cyfarthfa.
Cwmyrhondda.
Llanfabon, Capel Driudod.
Maesteg.
Penydaran.
Pontyrhun.
Resolven.
Skewen.

Monmouthshire.

Abercarn.
Abertileri.
Cwmbrain.
Christchurch, Maendu.
Llangibby, Coed y Pane.
Machen, Upper.
Nantyglo.
Newport, Pilgwenlly.
 „ St. Mark's.
Penmaen.

OLD CHURCHES REBUILT.

Glamorganshire.

Aberavon.
Cwmavon, Parish Church.
Flemingston.
Lavernock.
Llanharran.
Llantwit juxta Neath.
Merthyr Dovan.
Merthyr Mawr.
Newcastle.
Pendoylan.
Pentyrch.

Monmouthshire.

Aberystroth.
Coedkernew.
Llanddewi Fach.
Llangwm Isaf.
Llanmartin.
Llanvaenor.
Llanishen.
Malpas.
Risca.
Rockfield.
Shirenewton.
Wilcrick.

OLD CHURCHES RESTORED OR IMPROVED,

IN SOME INSTANCES AT A GREAT COST.

Glamorganshire.

Blaengwrach.
Cardiff, St. John's.
Coity.
Cowbridge.
Laleston.
Llandow.
Llanmaes.
Llantwit Major.
Penlline.
Penmark.
St. Bride's Major.
St. Bride's Minor.
St. Fagan's.
St. John's Chapel.
St. Nicholas.

Monmouthshire.

Bedwellty.
Bettws.
Blaenafon.
Caldicot.
Dingestow.
Gwernesney.
Kemeys Inferior.
Llanellen.
Llangattock Vibon Avel.
Llangeview.
Llansantffread.
Llansoy.
Llantilio Cresenny.
Llanvaches.
Llanvair Discoed.
Llanvihangel Pontymoel.
Llanvihangel Tor y Mynydd.
Llanwenarth.
Mounton.
Penterry.
Penhow.
Pontypool, St. James's.
Tregare.
St. Melon's.
St. Woollos.

GLEBE HOUSES BUILT,

OR HOUSES OF RESIDENCE OBTAINED BY GIFT OR PURCHASE.

Cyfarthfa.
Glyntaff.
Llandow.
Llanmaes.
Llansannor.
Llanvabon.
Llanwonno.
Pendoylan.
Pontyrhun.
Resolven.
Peterston super Ely.
St. George's.

Abersychan.
Bedwellty.
Bedwas.
Llanfoist.
Llanmartin.
Llandeilo Pertholy.
Llanhilleth.
Llangattock Vibon Avel.
Llanvaches.
Llanvrechfa.
Llansoy.
Malpas.
Mamhilad.
Pontnewynydd.
Tredunnock.
Skenfrith.

NEW SCHOOL-ROOMS.

Glamorganshire.

Aberafon.
 Aberdare, Aberaman.
 „ Cwmbach, Infant.
 „ Cwmaman.
 „ Town School.
 „ Mountain Ash.
 „ Llwydcoed.
 Cadoxton juxta Neath, Infant.
 „ Crynant.
 „ Bryncoch.
 Canton.
 Cardiff, St. Mary's.
 „ „ Infant.
 Coychurch.
 Glyntaff.
 Llanmaes.
 Llantrissant.
 „ Cymmar.
 Llandaff, Maendu.
 Llansannor.
 Llanwonno.
 Merthyr Tydfil, Infant.
 „ Pontyrhun.
 Neath, Melincryddan.
 „ Skewen.
 Pendoylan.
 Peterston super Ely.
 St. Nicholas.
 Sully.
 Whitchurch.

Monmouthshire.

Abersychan.
 Abertileri.
 Aberystroth.
 Caerwent.
 Chepstow, Infant.
 Cwmyoy.
 Goytre.
 Llandenny.
 Llanbennog.
 Llanvaches.
 Llanvrechfa, Cwmbrain.
 Machen (two).
 Magor.
 Mamhilad.
 Marshfield.
 Michel Troy.
 Monkswood.
 Monmouth.
 Penrhos.
 Pontymoel in Pantêg.
 Rhymney Iron Works.
 Rockfield.
 Rumney.
 St. Arvan's.
 St. Melon's.

SERVICES ARE PERFORMED

IN THE FOLLOWING PLACES BY THE BISHOP'S LICENCE OR
PERMISSION.

Glamorganshire.

Aberdare, Aberaman.	Llandaff, Maendu.
„ Cwmbach.	„ Ely.
„ Mountain Ash.	Llanfabon.
Cadoxton, Chapel.	Llantrissant, Cymmar.
„ Bryncoch.	Merthyr, Pentrebach.
Caerphilly.	Neath, Melyn Cryddan.
Canton, Grange.	Margam, Oakwood.
Cardiff, Iron Church.	„ Bryn.
Coychurch.	Penmark, Fonmon.
Dowlais.	Roath, Splott or Christchurch.
Eglwysilan, Nantgarw.	Spelter, in Llangynwyd.
Glyntaff, Pontypridd.	Tythegston, Cefn School-room.
Gelligaer, School Chapel.	Ystradyfodwg, Tir Herbert.
„ Pontlottyn.	

Monmouthshire.

Beaufort.	Pantêg, Penyrheol, and Ponty-
Blackwood, Cwmgelli.	moel.
Crumlin.	Rhymney.
Llangibby, Penycommon.	Trevethin Town School-room.

All, I think, except—
Blackwood,
Beaufort,
Cwmbach,
Crumlin,
Trevethin Town School-room,

Additional since 1849.

APPENDIX II.

INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO THE HOME MISSIONARY.

1. The Missionary is to devote himself to the work of giving religious instruction to the Miners and Colliers, and others who are scattered over the district in which he is appointed to minister. He is to consider himself as in no respect opposed to, but appointed only as supplementary to the parochial clergyman. He is to cultivate in every possible way a brotherly feeling with him, not entering any parish without first having obtained his *written* consent, and not attempting to minister in any part of the parish which he forbids.

2. Regarding himself under this aspect, he is to confine his ministrations to those parts of the several parishes which are from circumstances least able to avail themselves of the ordinary ministrations of the parochial clergyman; and, with the exception hereafter named, not to preach in any church or school-room, unless he have first obtained the Bishop's permission. For the same reason, when distance does not prevent, he should persuade the people to attend the complete services of the Church, and discourage any attendance on his preaching on the part of those who ordinarily frequent the services of the Church and licensed School-rooms, when those services are going on at the same time as his own.

3. He is to have services on the Lord's Day and on the working days, as often as his own strength permits, and as occasion may be given; and, as far as he can, he will make himself known to the people by personal intercourse, as a clergyman of the Church come to seek their spiritual good.

If these services are in the open air, it may be advisable to commence with a hymn, and then to use a few of the Collects and Prayers from the Book of Common Prayer before the sermon, with a view to

habituate the people to them. It is not however laid down absolutely that such prayers alone are to be used.

When a room can be obtained, he will read the Litany or the whole service for Morning or Evening Prayer, as may be expedient, the object being always kept in view to distinguish between his own ministrations and those of a dissenting minister.

He is recommended to keep a small stock of Church Prayer Books in hand for sale, or if a grant can be obtained from the Diocesan Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, for gratuitous distribution: and to endeavour to familiarize those who may attend his ministrations, with the use of the Prayer Book. For this purpose he will explain it when opportunity is given him, and try to induce one or more of his hearers to make the responses, in the hope of leading others to follow the example.

4. When he holds a service in any place, he is advised to give notice when he may be expected to come again, and to request those who are present to make it known.

5. He is not to preach controversial sermons as to any point in dispute between the Church and the Dissenters; but to endeavour to convince men of sin, and to lead them to repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ: to preach doctrine practically, and to enforce practice by Christian doctrine.

6. He is not to allow laymen to interfere in any religious service, but to keep all spiritual ministrations in his own hands.

7. As he is himself ever to bear in mind, so he should endeavour to make others understand, that this Home Mission is intended to lead to something better. When distance or other circumstances render attendance at Church impossible, as soon as it can be done with prudence, he should stir up the people to assist, every one according to his ability, in providing a church or licensed school, with permanent and regular services, for themselves.

8. If he finds any unbaptized persons who are desirous of being baptized, he is to communicate their names to the clergyman of the parish; but he is recommended not to press this rashly upon Anabaptists, who may not be prepared to receive it.

9. He will keep a journal of his proceedings, and once a month, or oftener if required, will submit it to the Bishop.

10. He is recommended, if possible, to obtain a lodging in the centre of his district, and to ask permission of the head of the family to conduct family prayer in his lodging.

11. He will endeavour, by God's help, to cultivate personal piety; by secret prayer, by the constant study of Holy Scripture, and once

a month by partaking of the Holy Communion, at the parish or other church; that he may be preserved from the spiritual dangers to which his peculiar position may expose him, and be enabled to adorn his Christian profession, and influence those among whom he ministers, by his own example.

On the occasion of his attending the church for the purpose referred to, he is permitted, if the clergyman should desire it, to take part in the service.

THE END.





